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# COUNTRY LIFE

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E. O. HOPPE

LADY CURZON.

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THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN  
COUNTRY LIFE & COUNTRY PURSUITS

OFFICES: 20, TAVISTOCK STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.

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## EDITORIAL NOTICE

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## A RESOLUTION FOR THE YEAR

EARLY in January it is the common custom to make resolutions for the New Year, most of which are not kept very long. But there is one which could easily be made in 1917, and that is a resolution to be economical. Now it should be understood that we do not mean a policy which may be described as that of saving candle ends or advocating all the little meannesses which are practised and excused under the phrase of "war-time economies." The question should be studied on a far broader basis. What we have in view is not the pinching and saving of an individual, but a determination on the part of the whole country to develop, and bring into its highest efficiency, the power of the nation. It would be easy to enlarge on this wide theme, but it is preferable, on the sense of the old saying, *ne sutor ultra*, to confine our attention to that branch of economy which this journal more particularly represents, viz., the production of human food. It ought to be the special business of everybody who lives in the country to contribute in every possible way they can to this end and

purpose. It is known that the Government will take such measures as are found commendable to enforce something of the kind, but in this matter, the voluntary principle is the better. Let compulsion be used if necessary, only the point will best be gained by everybody in his or her degree entering whole heartedly into the scheme. The big producers of food are of course the farmers, and it is hoped that they will tackle their pastures and their ploughland with a single-hearted determination to add to the national supplies. Yet zeal should not over-run discretion. Taking wheat as the most important crop they grow, there should be no reason to despair of spring sowing, provided that the varieties are chosen which have been found to be most suitable for sowing early in the year. They would mostly be found to be of Canadian origin or at any rate of Canadian use, because in Canada spring sowing is much commoner than in this country. Oats are very easy to grow and the contract price offered by the Government of 41s. 3d. a quarter ought to act as a powerful incentive. Yet a great national movement must not be founded on purely financial considerations, and the grower should proceed with his task inspired by the knowledge that whatever he is paid he is doing a service of immeasurable value to the country.

In growing potatoes, which are equally important with wheat from the food point of view, they are confronted with the great scarcity and dearth of seed. The potatoes which used to come from Scotland will not be available this year in any large quantities, and we notice in one list they are priced at 30s. a hundredweight, which means an enormous outlay. It is hoped that the Government will be able to arrange for a supply of seed potatoes on more reasonable terms, and £8 a ton has been mentioned, but unpleasant rumours are flying about concerning the disease which is attacking potatoes in clump. Perhaps these cases may be confined to one or two districts. It would indeed be a very great misfortune if the whole country were affected. The provision of seed potatoes ought to be set about immediately, because the success of the crop depends to such an enormous extent on having them well sprouted. In order to get a strong green sprout that need not be more than half an inch in length, if it is so much, the seed potatoes must be kept in shallow boxes and freely exposed to sunlight and atmosphere, while at the same time they are most carefully protected from frost.

The best growers begin the process of sprouting as early as November, so that no time should be lost in having them started. It has to be remembered that the stock of the old potatoes will be exhausted much earlier than usual this year, and whoever can forward his crop will be doing something both for himself and the country. Equally it is important that advantage should be taken of every bit of garden ground. Great Britain has this big advantage, as compared with Continental countries, that the proportion of houses with gardens attached is larger than in any other part of the world. These gardens, too, are as a rule very well cultivated whether they belong to the rich or poor. Anyone who takes the trouble to examine the crops in a cottage garden must be extraordinarily surprised at the excellence of the results as compared with the slender means at the disposal of the gardener. But in the course of many generations a cottage tradition has been established and almost instinctively the young people copy the plans by which their elders managed to get the plots manured. The cottager knows that nearly all waste products have a manurial value. He collects sweepings from the streets or the road, he saves the ashes from his kitchen fire, and although coal dust is not in itself a powerful fertiliser, as the cinder heap is made a receptacle for refuse of one kind or another, a compost is eventually produced which is better than might have been expected. Another practice much to be commended is that of collecting hedge clippings, weeds, long grass and bracken from the lanes, in fact everything inflammable, and burning it. The heap of ashes is rich in potash, and potash helps very considerably to give size to the potatoes.

## Our Frontispiece

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Lady Curzon, formerly Mrs. Alfred Duggan, whose marriage to Earl Curzon of Kedleston took place on the 2nd inst.

\*\*\* It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



# COUNTRY NOTES



ON our first appearance in 1917 we wish a happy New Year to our readers. It is of good omen that on the first day of the year appeared the Allies' answer to the German peace proposal. The document is uncompromising, although not quite so pointed and stern as the message of the Czar. It should convince every reader and every neutral that the proposal made by Germany could not possibly be accepted. The Kaiser's move is described as "a sham proposal lacking all substance and precision." That description is justified not only by the actual offer put before the Allies, but by the fact that when President Wilson asked certain definite questions about it, they were deliberately shirked. Therefore we cannot believe that the Kaiser and his advisers ever expected that this vague, indefinite offer would lead even to serious discussion. The fact is that neither the Central Powers nor the Entente Powers have yet gained so great an advantage that they can dictate to the other side. It is a hard thing to say when we remember the young lives that are being sacrificed and the treasure that is flowing out like water, but it is a stern fact that fighting must continue till the issue is decided one way or another. It would, no doubt, suit the Germans extremely well to finish the war now, because it seems obvious that they have shot their bolt. They caught the rest of Europe by surprise and hoped to achieve a decisive victory before resistance to them was properly organised. Their failure has been complete, and now they would like to choose the moment for finishing as they chose the moment for beginning the war. But this cannot be allowed.

VITALLY urgent is the need for that ploughing campaign which is required for the spring sowing. Tractors do not grow in a night like mushrooms, and apparently no great facilities are to be given for their manufacture till the wants of the Army are supplied. No patriotic Englishman will grumble because the Military push is given preference to the Agricultural push, but there is no need to neglect the latter entirely. More ploughing was done in December than at one time seemed possible, but the shortage of labour is so great that much has been left undone. In many instances landowners have bought American tractors to hire out to their tenants, but the results are not altogether satisfactory. The American tractors are built for conditions not similar to those in England. They are made for a soft road and a lighter furrow and get badly shaken if they are set either to plough a stiff clay deeply or travel on a hard road. Yet nobody wishes to dwell on their shortcomings. It is any port in a storm, and if the land can only be effectively turned over it matters not what the implement is. For the present it cannot truthfully be said that there is any certainty of the corn area being larger this year than it was last.

"AFTER the war there is going to be the wildest and maddest rush on to the land throughout the world ever experienced." So writes Mr. W. J. Malden in his article on "The Greater Agriculture," in the *Nineteenth*

*Century*. He considers that the movement will be so excessive in every country in the world that it will bring about a slump in prices similar to that which followed 1879. He looks forward to "a tremendous bound in opening up new land" in Russia. New countries which have not been involved in the war will open up more, and there will be an enormous development in the Colonies. But in all this Mr. Malden seems to be engaged in the process of crossing a bridge before he comes to it. What is going to happen in the world at large is of minor importance. What we do know is that the necessity has been demonstrated of making England more self-supporting in the future than she has been in the past. The only method by which this can be achieved is by more intensive cultivation—increased productivity. Never again will statisticians read with complacency of enormous quantities of food being shipped to this country at prices hardly more than nominal. The danger of that position has been thoroughly exposed.

THOSE interested in the breeding of livestock, especially of Shorthorn cattle, will be delighted to learn that the heifer called Lady Dorothy, belonging to Mr. J. Deane Willis of Bapton Manor, which won first in her class, that is to say, the yearling class, at last year's Royal Show, and was subsequently sold to the United States, has just won the Grand Championship at Chicago. This is a notable triumph for English Shorthorns and it comes at a very opportune moment. For some time past the shrewd Americans have been saying that England's misfortune is their opportunity and doing their very best to secure the South American trade. In point of fact, the judge at Chicago was a South American who had been got over on purpose to help the trade to that country. The American breeders are very considerably mistaken if they imagine that pre-occupation with the war is leading to a neglect of the Shorthorn business. The sales held and the prices obtained during the last year are in themselves a contradiction of any such theory, and it is well known that the best herds in this country are being kept up to a very high state of efficiency. It is very essential that this should go on if so important a matter as the exportation of Shorthorns is to be kept up to its old status after the war is over.

## GRANDFATHER.

"Some say they wish this curse had come  
When they, a few years hence, are dead,  
But I have reckoned well the sum—  
Five strong, young, ardent lives—instead  
Of these old bones—and yet, and yet,  
I'd rather see it through. What peace,  
My dear, think you, would my heart get  
In Heaven itself, if I could cease  
To care how England fared?  
Past all that falls I'll live, please God,  
And face the odds, proud to have shared  
My Country's wounds—His purging rod  
Struck when it should: I'd see her bow  
Beneath His Hand, humbled but blest,  
The blood of grace upon her brow,  
And our brave boys revenged enow . . .  
And then—to Him the rest!"

LILIAN STREET.

ON another page Lord Barnard calls attention to a subject of growing importance at a time when intensive cultivation is on the increase. The article in the *Journal of the Board of Agriculture* to which he refers is indeed ill informed, but it would be a mistake to ignore the feeling abroad in the country about the depredations of certain birds and animals. Undoubtedly the chief sinner is the wood-pigeon, and we know of no means yet devised by which the numbers of this bird can be effectually thinned. Next must be placed the rabbit. It is very certain that in the new plantations which must be speedily made to compensate for the immense destruction of wood involved by the war there is no room for the rabbit. In Germany it is exterminated wherever forestry is carried on scientifically and on a large scale. In Belgium there is a law which gives the cultivator a right of compensation against a neighbouring owner from whose coverts rabbits emerge to attack crops. The onus of fencing and so forth, therefore, is thrown upon the sportsman and not upon the cultivator.

THE third place must be given to pheasants, which at certain times of the year consume large quantities of corn. And we are not quite sure that our correspondent

is right about their being little or no artificial rearing going on just now. At any rate, Professor Somerville, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, tells a different story. "I came across a case last season," he writes, "where a game tenant had 15,000 young birds on a rearing-ground practically within sight of a military hospital, which was hard put to it to find eggs for wounded soldiers." He relates, too, that he accidentally stumbled on a similar case in another county. Professor Somerville is a sportsman as well as a farmer, but we think sportsmen in the future will be keener after real sport and not so keen after monstrous bags.

THE Government of quick decision is not dealing as promptly as was expected with the difficulties of food production. The question at the moment is that of supplying seed potatoes. Here we come face to face with the shortness of supply in Scotland whence in normal times the main supply is drawn. But the Scottish crop this year is a failure, and we notice the celebrated firm of Dobbie ask thirty shillings a hundredweight, or £30 a ton, in the new list and are not certain of the supply. It is not of much use urging people to dig up their grass plots and destroy their rose beds to plant potatoes if this is a fair indication of prices for seed. We have heard the Board of Agriculture is going to intervene; if so it should do so at once. The seed potatoes ought to be already in their chitting boxes. Every good grower is now cognisant of the immense advantage of having them green-sprouted and the process should really have begun last November. All the Government has done so far is to issue a leaflet, warning cultivators against setting the varieties which are particularly susceptible to Scab, and naming a few that are not. But the provision of seed potatoes at a price which the buyers will regard as reasonable is the great thing needed.

WE hope our readers will not fail to notice that a considerable amount of correspondence this week is printed in our agricultural columns. The letters are very important and were chosen from the large number that are being sent, as dealing with practical points in the war-time management of land. In one, a landowner asks for advice in regard to the best way of selling a plantation of mixed woodland, grubbing up the stumps, and preparing the land for cultivation. In another, one of the most reputable gardeners in England, Mr. Gibson of Welbeck Gardens, gives his objections to the many proposals for the cultivation of lawns and pleasure grounds. The question of tractors for the farm is dealt with by Mr. H. P. Sanderson in a few pithy and pointed paragraphs. These are all matters which are engaging close attention at the moment, and no doubt many of our readers will be glad to add their quota to the common experience. They are at full liberty to do so, but in these times of limited space, we would like to suggest to them the cultivation of point and brevity in their epistolary style.

TO a large circle of friends the announcement of Mr. Reginald Smith's death brought a sense of personal bereavement. He was one of those Editors who love to have their friends around them. It might be truly said that he was born with a lucky spoon in his mouth, for he was a success in college, a success in the law and a successful editor. Not in the days of Thackeray or Frederick Greenwood was the *Cornhill* brighter than he made it. This was the more to his credit inasmuch as the traditions of the *Cornhill* had to be acquired as Mr. Smith did not inherit them. He was not related to Mr. Smith, the publisher, but became connected with the firm by marriage. Yet he kept along the ancient lines, seeking always for what was best in preference to what was most sensational. And he succeeded. Other great publishers who used to be in the habit of publishing a magazine have stooped in deference to a change that is said to have come over the public's taste. They were good and characteristic in their way—*Macmillan's Magazine*, *Murray's Magazine* and *Longman's Magazine*. But the *Cornhill* and *Blackwood's* alone rode buoyantly on the new waters and held their way as securely as did the heavier reviews, the *Nineteenth Century*, the *Fortnightly* and the *Quarterly*. Apart from all that many of us will miss Mr. Reginald Smith for the sake of the warm heart that underlay a bearing that at a first meeting seemed a little too dignified in its antique courtliness.

ON January 1st some important, and a great number of very unimportant, alterations were made in the railway service of the country. They were as a rule received very good-naturedly, though they are likely to cause some grumbling

later on. The changes are in the nature of retrogression to a state of things from which it was thought we had made definite advance. There are a great number of stoppages even in a little journey and those responsible for them do not seem to have taken into account the value of time to business men. By far the largest majority of those who come up from the immediate outskirts of the city are doing work as important to the country as to themselves, and though they shrug their shoulders and put up with it, it is certainly not a profitable use of their talents to keep them shivering in railway stations in the early hours of the day. Again, some of the alterations are in the direction of red tape. For example, every season ticket has to be shown. This is quite unnecessary, as porters on the various lines, practically speaking, know the face of every season ticket holder and can spot a stranger at once. There is a very definite order that anyone not able to show his season ticket shall pay the ordinary cost of his journey there and then. Probably this regulation will be neglected, because it is so very unreasonable. If a man happens to change his clothes and forget to take the ticket out of his waistcoat pocket it is ridiculous that he should be fined to the extent of paying a second time for his journey. These irritating and trifling alterations are not likely to produce greater economy, but the reverse.

#### THE REMOUNT TRAIN.

Every head across the bar,  
Every blaze and snip and star,  
Every nervous, twitching ear,  
Every soft eye filled with fear,  
Seeks a friend and seems to say :  
" Whither now, and where away ? "  
Seeks a friend and seems to ask :  
" Where the goal, and what the task ? "

Wave the green flag ! Let them go !—  
Only horses ? Yes, I know ;  
But my heart goes down the line  
With them, and their grief is mine !—  
There goes honour, there goes faith  
Down the way of dule and death,  
Hidden in the cloud that clings  
To the battle-wrath of kings !

Tthere goes timid child-like trust  
To the burden and the dust !  
High-born courage, princely grace  
To the peril it must face !  
There go stoutness, strength and speed  
To be spent where none shall heed,  
And great hearts to face their fate  
In the clash of human hate !

Wave the flag, and let them go !—  
Hats off to that wistful row  
Of lean heads of brown and bay,  
Black and chestnut, roan and grey !  
Here's good luck in lands afar—  
Snow-white streak, and blaze, and star !  
May you find in those far lands  
Kindly hearts and horsemen's hands !

W. H. OGILVIE.

WITH the object of preventing a shortage of potatoes early in the coming year Mr. A. B. Lister, D.I.C., B.Sc., the Director of the Experimental and Research Station at Cheshunt, has drawn up a pamphlet entitled "Hints on the Culture of Early Potatoes under Glass." This is primarily for the use of the Lea Valley nurserymen and market gardeners who, at the request of the Board of Agriculture, have agreed to devote considerable space under glass to the cultivation of early potatoes. The pamphlet, which may be had on application to Mr. Lister, contains a deal of useful information on sprouting and planting the tubers, together with a selection of varieties, and advice on soil preparation and manuring. It should, however, be pointed out that Mr. Lister, like all practical men with whom we are acquainted, does not anticipate remunerative results from a commercial point of view unless unusually high prices are obtained. Moreover, unless a very large number of market growers devote one or more large houses to early potato cultivation the aggregate crop will not materially affect the situation.



# INCREASING THE WHEAT CROP

## WHY NOT 1917?

**I**N Mr. Prothero's enunciation of an agricultural policy he let it be understood that there was going to be a great push forward for preparing some millions of acres for wheat in 1918. But the present year is that which engages our attention first. If we were all to be starved in 1917, it would be poor consolation to know that there was to be a bumper crop the year after. In order to see what can be done within the present twelve months, we have asked Mr. Vendelmans to write something about the effects of spring sowing from his Belgian experience. He has begun with wheat and will follow with oats, barley and potatoes. English readers will, we hope, recognise that he has made out an excellent case for starting with the wheat early in February.—ED.

### SPRING WHEAT.

Under good conditions spring wheat may yield 5 quarters to the acre. This means, at the officially fixed price of 60s., £15 to the acre, not including the value of the straw. Spring wheat yields best on a rich loam which has received farmyard manure on the preceding crop, but other soils also can give very profitable returns. Among them, first and second class grass land would be the best, but even soil of poorer quality can be used. One important point to be remembered is that in poor, unmanured grass land, phosphoric acid is very often the limiting factor of production. But as the soil is deficient in a good proportion of phosphoric acid, unassimilated potash will be available, as well as a reserve of nitrogenous organic matter; so that occasionally a good wheat crop may be obtained by liming and phosphatic manuring. On sandy soil farmyard manure would be best on account of the potash it contains, but it is not likely to be available for spring wheat because it will be more urgently required for the potato crop. Moreover, it would be too late to apply it unless it were well rotted.

### PLOUGHING AND WORKING THE SOIL.

The soil must be ploughed as soon as possible, because wheat does not like loose soil. It must be ploughed fairly deep. This will induce deep rooting and allows the crop to derive more food from the soil itself, but care must be taken to avoid bringing infertile blue clay to the surface. When the soil is already permeable, it can be flat-ploughed; when it is not so, or when it is shallow, it is often ploughed in "lands." The different ploughings generally applied to winter wheat might be replaced by the use of the cultivator instead. Afterwards the soil should be broken by using the Crosskill or a similar roller. This both pulverises the surface and packs the lower soil. Working clay soil too wet or heavy rains following the work may destroy the flocculation and greatly hinder the crop; therefore no finishing off ought to be done until the weather and the soil conditions are favourable. Other soils will not be damaged to the same extent by working in bad weather. Often sowing is preceded by a scarification of the surface, because the soil must be prepared more finely for spring wheat than for winter wheat.

### MANURING.

Where wheat is to be grown lime is necessary, and a natural deficiency of this element in the soil marks the difference between wheat and rye land. Not only is it essential to the success of the crop, but in the case of pastures and other humiferous soils an application of two or in some cases three tons would liberate potash, which will not be on the manure market, and intensify decomposition and nitrification. Phosphoric acid is necessary in every soil. It must be given in easily assimilable forms. When basic slag is used, only the good quality slag with high citric solubility should be bought. As much as 3cwt. may be harrowed or cultivated in, so as to have it thoroughly mixed with the soil. At the final preparation, which takes place a short time before sowing, about 5cwt. of superphosphate is applied when no basic slag has been used; otherwise 2½cwt. will be sufficient, and at the same time three-quarters of a hundredweight of sulphate of ammonia. Shortly after sprouting, three-quarters of a hundredweight of nitrate of soda is given, or, when it is available, a good application of liquid manure. Liquid manure is a satisfactory dressing because of the potash it contains. When liming is resorted

to, the nitrogenous manure must be reduced. Heavy manuring with easily assimilable fertilisers is necessary because spring wheat, although its root system is less developed than that of winter wheat, must assimilate food in a much shorter time and in greater total quantity. As a matter of fact, while a spring wheat crop absorbs about the same quantity of phosphoric acid and lime as a winter crop, it uses a large quantity of potash and nitrogen for equal produce. While winter wheat takes six months to reach the shooting period, spring wheat has only about a month, and to be able to produce a similar quantity of organic matter heavy quantities of easily assimilable elements are necessary at the beginning of growth. But from the shooting till the flowering period a still greater proportion of nitrogen than of other manures is required. By the time the ear is formed the plant has absorbed nearly all the manures it requires, and now only absorbs phosphoric acid. Obviously, it has no time to select its food; the material must be ready to hand. Owing to its more reduced root system spring wheat does not find the manure so easily, and owing to its shorter period of growth much more fertilising elements must be found in the unit of time, so that the abundance of the crop will be in proportion to the abundance of easily assimilable food. For this reason spring wheat cannot be produced as cheaply as winter wheat. It should, however, be noticed that, apart from the nitrates, any manures that the plants fail to utilise are not lost, but remain in the soil for the next crop.

### SEED SOWING AND CLEANING.

Attention must be called to the variety of seed. There is a marked difference between some varieties of winter wheat and spring wheat, so that they cannot be used indiscriminately. Even among the actual spring wheats some are to be preferred to others. In England Red Marvel, April Bearded and for suitable districts Red Fife have been recommended; while on the Continent the White Chiddam is reckoned as one of the best. The quantity of seed to be used to the acre varies according to the size of the grain, but is always comparatively higher than for winter wheat. The rows are also nearer together, and instead of spacing them at 12 in., as is sometimes recommended for winter wheat, they should only be about 8 in. apart. The thicker sowing and closer rows partly counteract the excessive tendency to shoot, which naturally retards ripening. An allowance of 2½ bushels of seed is an average to the acre. Sowing takes place according to the weather and soil conditions from the end of February till the beginning of March. The earlier the better, but there is no use in sowing until the soil has attained a temperature of about 5°5 Centigrade. In average soil the seed is sown about 2 in. deep; in wet soil about 1½ in. Sowing is followed by rolling. Later on, in April, when the wheat has attained a height of about 4 in., it is often advisable to roll it again. The crop will also require cleaning. The first cleaning is done with the harrow, the second with the hoe. At the end of April or in the beginning of May, when growth is luxuriant and the crop has acquired a dark greenish blue colour, it is a good plan to drive sheep over the field to nip off the tops. Ploughing by motor plough or tractor is advisable. Much more work can be done, and day and night teams can easily be arranged if time presses. The motor also could be used for other cultural operations, and even for hoeing if it were of a sufficiently light type.

### FIELD COST OF PRODUCTION.

The cost of production of spring wheat varies necessarily according to circumstances. But putting the cost of

	£	s.	d.
Ploughing to the acre at .. .. .	1	0	0
Cultivating, rolling and scarifying .. .. .	15	0	
Sowing and rolling, done at the same time .. .. .	7	0	
Harrowing and hoeing .. .. .	10	0	
Manuring—nitrate of soda and sulphate of ammonia .. .. .	1	4	0
" superphosphate and basic slag .. .. .	1	10	0
Liming, allowing less cost of nitrogenous manuring .. .. .	1	0	0
Seed .. .. .	1	7	6
Rent for second and third class pasture .. .. .	5	0	
Makes a total of .. .. .	£7	18	6

This of course can only be regarded as an average cost representing a good crop on the field.



## NOTES AND COMMENTS ON FOOD PRODUCTION

### HOW TO RECLAIM AN OLD PLANTATION.

A well known landowner from the Midlands asks us to insert the following enquiry. It is a very important one, to which we hope to reply next week, but meantime will be happy to hear suggestions from correspondents who have had experience of clearing timber for agricultural crops:

"Could any correspondent give me information on the following points:

"1.—Best way of selling 70 acres of timber standing, say, 2,800 trees, all sorts, mostly oak, but also larch, spruce, sycamore, elm, beech, Scots fir, ash and poplar. I am measuring it up and preparing a schedule.

"2.—Cost of grubbing per acre and best method of doing it by steam. Are grappling chains used for the purpose?

"3.—Cost of steam cultivation per acre and names of firms who will contract for 2 and 3?"

### THE FOOD OF PARTRIDGES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—May I draw attention to an article, in the December issue of the Journal of the Board of Agriculture, on the "Destruction of Farm Vermin," suggesting that in many districts partridges and pheasants should be effectively reduced? I do not doubt that where large numbers of pheasants are reared in the vicinity of cornfields they do a certain amount of damage, particularly if the harvest should happen to be very late, as it is sometimes in this district; but at the present time there can be little risk of such damage, as I believe that this year, as a rule, no pheasants have been reared. But I am very much astonished to hear that partridges injure farm crops, and I should be interested to know if you or any of your readers can throw any light on the subject. Of the other animals mentioned, Masters of Hounds should at once be approached if foxes are doing damage. The Ground Game Acts contain ample provision for dealing with hares and rabbits. (In some cases farmers are as much to blame as landowners for encouraging rabbits.) Rooks are not protected or preserved in any way, and owners of woods should give every facility for their destruction in the breeding season; but it must be remembered that they do good as well as harm.

Rats, mice and voles can be kept down by encouraging and protecting owls, which, curiously enough, the writer does not refer to, although he mentions stoats and weasels. Sparrows the farmer must cope with, and it is shown that in some places he does so with success. The most difficult pest to deal with, in my opinion, is the wood-pigeon, and I cannot agree with the writer of the article that at certain seasons they might be secured in "immense numbers." The destruction of fifty or a hundred by means of an organised shoot is a mere flea bite, and the suggestions in a recent Board of Agriculture leaflet on the subject strike me as too elaborate for practical use. The man who will devise a simple and effective means of destroying wood-pigeons in "immense numbers" will deserve the gratitude of all agriculturists. The frequent references in the article to "game" lead me to think that the writer is unaware of the fact that during the season now drawing to a close nowhere has a large head of game been maintained. Probably, owing to heavy taxation, shortage of guns, shortage of keepers, etc., the stock of game will be so small as to be negligible from an agricultural point of view in the season 1917-18.

In dealing with hares and rabbits I ought to have added that owners of woodlands should use their utmost endeavours to prevent the stock increasing, especially rabbits, in the approaching breeding season, in their woods, where, of course, the Ground Game Acts cannot operate. Shortage of warreners may make this more difficult than usual.—BARNARD.

[In COUNTRY LIFE for August 31st, 1912, Mr. John Hammond went very thoroughly into the question of the food of partridges. At that time he was engaged at Cambridge University School of Agriculture examining the crops of birds from different parts of the country for the Board of Agriculture. The conclusion he arrived at was, in his own words: "It is probable that the partridge deserves the protection that is afforded it, not only for the sake of sport, but also for the benefits it confers on the farmer by eating weed seeds and possibly injurious seeds; the young certainly do so. This more than counterbalances the harm it does by eating a little seed corn and a few clover leaves; the corn taken from the stubbles having no economic importance." It is strange that the author of the article in the current Journal of the Board of Agriculture should write in apparent ignorance of the work done by a young colleague who at present is in the Army. This by no means exhausts the number of his errors. Lord Barnard is right in saying that too much consideration is given to stoats and weasels, while the work done by owls is ignored altogether. The present writer for some time lived in a new house built in a very remote part of the country. There were, as always happens in similar cases till dogs and cats are introduced into the neighbourhood, a great abundance of stoats and weasels, and rats and mice as well. Occasionally a weasel was seen chasing and killing a mouse, and more than one fight was witnessed between a stoat and an old rat. But the stoats and weasels produced no perceptible decrease in the number of rodents. Of course, others may have had different experience, but we have spoken to many careful observers who have taken up their abode in a solitary new house where field mice prevailed at the beginning to a most astonishing degree, and they were never cleared out by natural agencies, and only yielded finally to the attentions of the domestic cat and a sharp little terrier. Is it not rather ludicrous, too, that the writer should gravely inform his public that rabbits form an excellent meat diet and might be much more widely used than at present? If he will look in at any of the big stores, he will find the price of rabbits at the present moment

is 1s. 11d. each, which suggests that the public have little to learn about the edible properties of the rabbit, and, further, that in times like these the rabbit has a rather thin time of it, what with the legitimate killing by the farmers and the scarcely less deadly destruction accomplished by poachers.—ED.]

### TRACTOR VERSUS HORSE POWER.

Mr. H. P. Sanderson has sent us the following interesting notes as to what he considers the advantages of the agricultural tractor over the horse. He offers them with an apology for not having the figures, which will follow later:

"1.—The fuel cost of working a farm by motor power entirely is approximately one-third of the cost of horse keep to do the same work.

"2.—The balance so saved automatically becomes human food in the form of cereals or meat.

"3.—The amount of labour saved by motor versus horses is variable. I should set aside market gardening and deal with an average mixed farm, on which we mainly depend for home grown food. On such a farm hay and harvest must be quickly garnered, and the labour required is about the same in either case, but woman labour can then be advantageously used to some extent. During the remainder of the year, threshing excepted (when women can again be used), the manual labour of motor power if fully utilised is about half that required for horse power, and even then more spare time is available for odd jobs when the motor or motors are compelled to be idle through weather or other conditions.

"4.—To reap the full advantage of these saving conditions, a really reliable general purpose motor, even at an increased cost, is obviously preferable to a cheaper machine not fully equipped or capable of undertaking all-round work and conditions.

"5.—If we take it as an approximate fact that by fully utilising motor power on the farm two-thirds of the horse power and half the man power (subject to extra help at hay, harvest and threshing) can be saved, we must have from this source a large increase of home grown human food available for those employed in any capacity off the land whose efforts are directed to winning the war, and afterwards through the industries the winning back of the wealth of the country.

"6.—It is not by ploughing up pastures alone or the employment of motors alone, or by any other single advantage, that the home grown food question can have a decisive influence, but by sweeping them all in together and fully utilising anything and everything bearing on the same end. The desired result would then be obtained.

"7.—None of us would like to live without meat, but it must be remembered that the more cattle we produce in the country, the less will be our food supply produced. Obviously there are certain pastures and food that can only be utilised by feeding cattle, but when more cattle are kept in the country than is required to eat this class of feed, they must then eat what might be available for human food. For instance, barley and wheat meal are the finest pig meals, but it takes 5lb. to 6lb. of these meals to produce 1lb. of pork. A man would live five or six times longer on the meal than on the meat it produces. Granted that a certain amount of meat and fats are necessary, but it is obvious that there is a point that can be reached in the number of cattle kept in the country, beyond which their numbers would jeopardise our food supply. Has it been reached and exceeded already?"

### TO CONVERT A LAWN INTO A POTATO PLOT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Being much interested in the breaking up of land for potato growing to meet the present shortage, I have read the letter of "Cestrian" asking for information to break up his pleasure ground of half an acre, also the editorial reply to the same, and it is in regard to the latter that I venture to write this note. I feel sure by the advice given that "Cestrian" and many others will have no hesitation in at once beginning breaking up their pleasure ground without further consideration, and my object in writing is to give a word of caution before proceeding, or the results may in many instances prove disastrous. As a practical grower I cannot believe that any novice can get a return of from ten to twelve tons of potatoes from half an acre of pleasure ground. Much more likely is he to get less than three to four. I fail to see the utility of this work unless there is a fair chance of success, but as a general rule pleasure grounds afford a poor prospect of this. First of all, there is the intense shadow of trees, making for weak and spindly growth, and the poor quality of the soil from continuous cutting with the lawn mower, everything going off the land and nothing returned. Again, such growth becomes a ready prey to disease. One cannot but admire the patriotic spirit of "Cestrian" and others in being anxious to do their "bit," but in the cultivation of potatoes an open position with fairly rich soil is necessary, and if possible the use of the plough should replace hand labour as far as is practical. Let every possible space be planted that is likely to give a good return, such as small paddocks or other grazing land that is well in the open and has a sufficiency of herbage and fibre that can be ploughed in with a view to the maintenance of the crop. From such conditions as these there is little fear of success, but I should hesitate to dig up small pleasure grounds that might lead to failure.—JAMES GIBSON.

[Ten or twelve tons per acre was what we meant. We are glad to print the opinion of an authority so excellent and so practical as Mr. Gibson. Land in deep shadow is certainly not potato land. Otherwise cutting by the mower is no objection, because equivalent manures can be put in. If grassland is dug or ploughed in time, it is excellent for potatoes, because there is generally more potash available and much nitrogenous manure.—ED.]

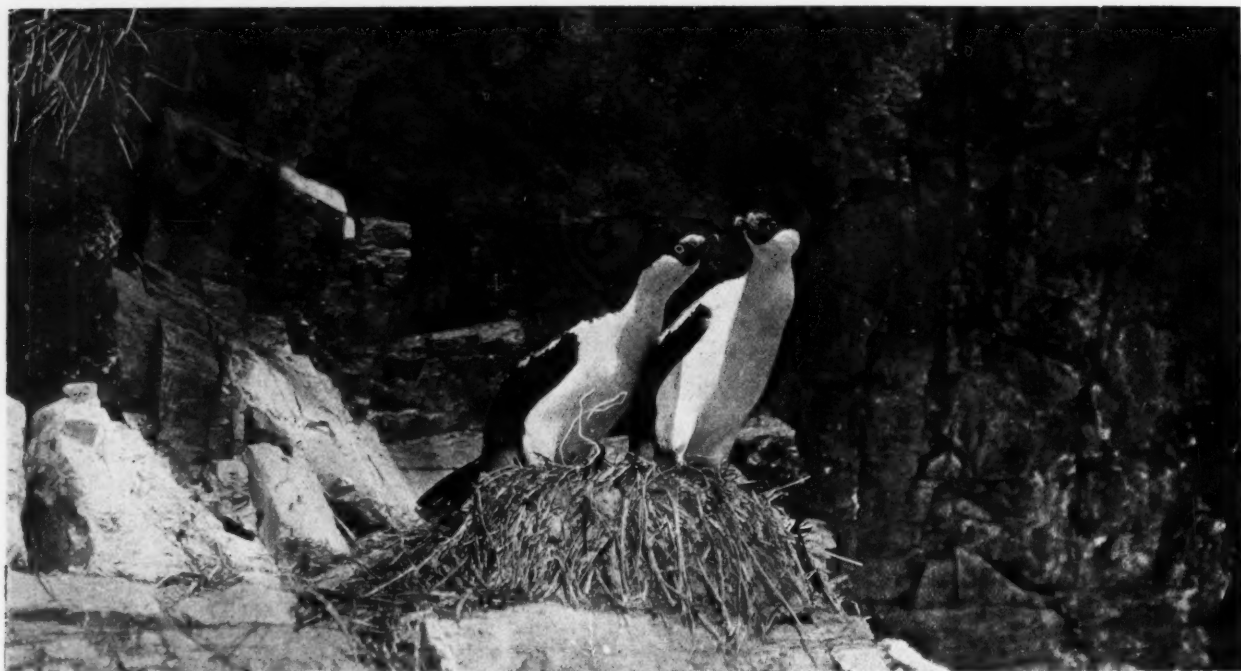


SPRING SOWING.



# AT HOME WITH THE BLUE-EYED SHAGS

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT CUSHMAN MURPHY, BROOKLYN MUSEUM, NEW YORK.



WORK AND WOONG.

**A**MONG the few kinds of birds which have adapted themselves to the severe conditions of life along Antarctic ocean fronts is a group of white-breasted, blue-backed, crested cormorants. Long of wind, strong of wing, and capable of climbing and walking upright along the slippery ledges of coastal cliffs the cormorants are at home in three elements. They are *par excellence* the fisherfolk of the Far South, and so well have they proved themselves fitted to eke out a prosperous existence in the land of gales, ice, and rock-bristling shores, that they have spread their range clear round the southern end of the world, until some representative of the group has come to inhabit each one of the chains of islands that encircle the

Antarctic. All of these cormorants are characterised by a ring of bright blue, naked skin about the eyes, whence the common name, blue-eyed shag.

At the Bay of Isles in blustery South Georgia I met the blue-eyed shags in November, 1912. The wild fiords of this arm of the sea are bounded by steep and icy mountains, but the bay itself is dotted with low, flat-topped islets on which an ice-cap never forms, and which are kept clear of new snow by the denuding violence of the wind. On the precipitous faces of these isles the shags build their homes.

About the last of December—the June of the Antarctic—I made the difficult landing on the lee side of the smallest islet in the Bay of Isles, and scrambled up the face of its



A BROODING FEMALE.

*Her throat and lower mandible are palpitating, probably with fear.*



rocky wall. It consisted of a rugged little pile of strata, tipped on edge, channelled by many gorges and pools into which the waves surged, swashing back and forth the long strands of kelp and other seaweeds. On the plateau at the top of the cliff, the rock proved to be covered with thick black soil and a luxuriant growth of tussock grass, which was swarming with those minute and lowly organised insects, the "springtails" or *Collembola*. A pair of Antarctic pipits, the southernmost of songbirds, inhabited the islet, and also a few burrowing whale-birds (*Prion*); but the principal residents were the shags whose nests lined the rocky and grassy ledges all over the northernly or sunny face of the islet's declivity.

The courtships of the shags seemed to be progressing while the nests were building. I saw one pair standing side

together at all of the nests. I lifted off one female, which had been brooding with her wings spread, and discovered a blind, black, and unclad shaglet, the eggshell from which it had just crawled, and another egg not yet broken open. It was impossible to keep either parent away from the nest, although the male was less brave than his mate. Both were very gentle, not attempting to defend themselves; they merely watched me sharply with their close-set, blue-rimmed eyes. The only note that they uttered was a low croak. They kept their bills parted, however, the mandible and throat trembling violently, just as when one's teeth chatter. When I tossed them aside in order to see the nestling, they would fly back immediately, and the female would plump right into the nest. The ugly baby, the cause of all this solicitude, acted as though it were in a violent temper. Perhaps it was cold. It kicked about so that I could scarcely photograph it.



A PAIR AT THE NEST, THE FEMALE BROODING.



MALE SHAG RETURNING TO HIS MATE.

by side on their unfinished home, and curtsying. They would put their cheeks close together, bow down their heads and necks, then, twisting their necks, put the other cheeks together in the same way, and curtsy again. After this graceful minuet had been continued for several minutes, the male would launch off on a short exuberant flight, from which he would soon return to resume the love making.

The nests were steep-sided, truncated cones of mud and withered tussock grass, with a rather deep depression. Some were situated on the tops of dead tussock hummocks, others on the shelves of lichen-covered rock, with long icicles overhanging them. Many contained sets of two or three greenish eggs, others young birds just hatched or a few days old, and another held three full-grown fledglings which had lost nearly all their down. Both parents seemed to be



DISCUSSING THE INTRUDER.



FEMALE AND YOUNG, SEVEN WEEKS OLD.

rolling its belly upward, jerking itself around the nest cavity, squeaking loudly all the while.

A few days later I visited the islet again. The shags still seemed to be enraptured lovers, for they were all together in pairs and were twisting and curving their sinuous necks without cessation. Most of the eggs had hatched. Some of the nestlings were just beginning to sprout their dusky down, and horribly ugly little monsters they looked, with their black bodies, pink throats, blue bills, and Hottentot tufts all over their shiny turtlish forms. They were well guarded by their parents, however. I saw one pair attack and bite the neck of a neighbour which had alighted on their particular crag. I noted, again, that the females were more unselfish and devoted than the males. The courting birds were still bowing, caressing, and circling, besides which they sometimes stretched up and beat their wings rapidly, without producing any drumming sound.

The females, which clung so tenaciously to the nests, their mandibles trembling as they watched me, were exquisitely gentle creatures. The males always stood on the far side of their mates so as to avoid possible danger, but the brooding mothers allowed me

to stroke their backs without moving. The colouring of these birds was as rich as could be imagined—glossy blue, violet, and metallic green on the upper surface, immaculate white on throat and breast. A line of pure white feathers extended also along the inner border of the wing. The wart-like excrescences above the bill were of a deep chrome yellow, and the iris was brown, surrounded first by a chocolate cornea, and then by the cyanine blue of the lid. I offered a small dead fish to one brooder. It was accepted immediately, but was dropped again, doubtless because it was stale.

It was many days before I once again visited the shag colony. All through the midsummer month of January, however, we saw the birds from the ship as they plunged from their rocks into the kelp for fish, or swam about among the areas of floe ice. When rising into flight, they kicked

heavily along the surface for a considerable distance. They flew in string formation, a dozen or more together, and often spread their broad feet to serve as an adjunct to the tail, particularly when stopping headway. Their flight seemed to be more or less aimless, for they travelled in circles, as a rabbit runs.

Finally, on February 16th, I climbed the shag rock for the last time.



AT HOME ON A BARREN SHORE.

The youngsters had begun to acquire greenish quills and white breasts, and were wandering away from the nests among the high tussock hummocks. They had a low mellow whistle, which they repeated over and over, swelling out their throats. The breeding ledges were foul with decayed fish remains and excreta. The parents were rather less confident than when

the young were more helpless, but the females as usual showed less timidity than the males.

In March, the end of the summer, when we pointed our good ship's prow northward toward warmer seas, many of the adult shags were still caressing and curtsying on their cliff-built homes.

## IN THE GARDEN

### THE CULTIVATION OF EARLY PEAS AND POTATOES.

**N**OW that so much attention is centred on home-grown vegetables, this is a favourable opportunity to point out the great value of warm, sunny borders, more especially under walls, for the earliest supplies of Peas and Potatoes. Fortunately, these two most useful of all garden crops may be grown together on the same border, and by arranging them on the following plan they may be grown to the mutual advantage of one another. The rows should run due north and south. Unless the wall happens to be facing due south, this will necessitate arranging the rows in a slanting direction; but, after all, there is no reason why the rows in a border should run at right angles to the wall or pathway save for the conventionalities which so often dominate the kitchen garden. The advantage of having rows due north and south is that the crops may have full benefit of the sun's rays, and if the border is made to slope to the south, so much the better for early crops. There is another advantage in placing the rows this way, as we shall presently see, for the early Peas in parallel rows afford protection to the Potatoes from frost and from the cold east winds. Every gardener knows that damage to plants by frost is greatly increased by the bright morning sun which usually follows a frost at night, and if the Potato tops are only shaded for the first few hours they may escape without injury. This is where the rows of early Peas are so very helpful to the Potatoes, for by sowing Peas at every fourth or fifth row they will give shelter to the Potatoes from the east winds and provide just the shade from the sun which is so much needed on frosty mornings. Let it not be thought that the Peas will afford all the protection necessary to keep off the frost from the Potatoes. Sufficient dry litter should be kept close at hand to give a light covering to the rows on the approach of frosts, removing it as soon as danger is over. Frame lights may also be used to cover Potatoes; and here we may say that portable frames in open quarters are unquestionably a great help to Potatoes in their early stages, but they should not be kept over the Potatoes too long. The great difficulty about growing Potatoes under glass is that they are inclined to make too much top growth at the expense of the tubers, and it is for this reason, coupled with the expense of seed and the labour involved in making up borders, that market growers regard the cultivation of Potatoes under glass as an unprofitable undertaking. In any case, Potatoes may be had from warm borders in the open by early June without the labour and expense of forcing arrangements.

Returning to the question of protecting Potatoes from frost, the novice is apt to make the mistake of earthing up the rows too early and too frequently; that is, before the green leaves have had a proper chance of seeing daylight. This has the effect of weakening the plants. There always has been keen local competition among gardeners to be the first with Peas and Potatoes. How far keener should it be now that the very life of the nation is at stake. Close attention to detail will make all the difference between success and failure in the cultivation of these early crops.

The preparation of the borders is of the utmost importance. They should be dug over or trenched without delay, at the same time incorporating with the soil a heavy dressing of well rotted manure, but fresh stable manure should be avoided. The ideal soil for Potatoes is a sandy loam, but in any case the early borders should be well made up with leaf-soil, old Mushroom-bed manure or exhausted hotbeds, and any light rich soil, such as old potting soil or road scrapings from roads on which there is little or no motor traffic. Scott and wood-ashes should be applied in the drills at the time of planting, and lime should now be scattered over the surface of the border, particularly if soil pests abound.

Peas, like Potatoes, enjoy deep tillage and considerable manure. Early Peas that do not grow more than 2ft. high

should be selected, such, for example, as Pioneer, Hundred-fold, Little Marvel, American Wonder and The Sherwood. Sow in late January or early February in drills 3in. deep, leaving the seeds about 2in. apart. Dust the rows with soot as soon as the seedlings appear, and stake with brushwood when the seedlings have made about 3in. of growth, not forgetting to place strands of black cotton criss-cross along the rows to protect the seedlings from the attention of birds.

Early Potatoes should be planted on the first dry days in March. Plant carefully and rub off all the sprouts except two. It is better to plant the small seed Potatoes whole than to cut up larger tubers. Plant in rows 2ft. apart and leave about 1ft. between the sets. Do not plant with a dibber, but take out shallow trenches with the spade and cover the tubers with 3in. of fine soil from the top of the tuber.

The sprouting of the seed Potatoes, so essential for the early crop, should be commenced now. This is no new treatment, but it is astonishing to see how often it is unheeded except by the most successful growers, including market gardeners, who are strongly in favour of this practice. In order that the tubers should be properly sprouted, they should be placed in full daylight in a place safe from frost and where no artificial heat is applied. The staging of a cold greenhouse is a very suitable place. Put the tubers in single layers in trays, standing them on end with most eyes uppermost. When planting-time comes round, the sturdy green sprouts should be about an inch long. By following this simple method of sprouting in trays the crop will be ready to lift at least two or three weeks earlier than when dormant seed is planted. If, owing to a wet spring, the planting has to be deferred, it is advisable to cover the seed tubers with a little light sandy soil. Those who are in the habit of fondly keeping the seed Potatoes in a dark place should note that every weak and anemic-looking sprout means so much exhaustion to the parent tuber. Without further delay seed Potatoes should be brought to the light to save the formation of premature and useless growths.

A selection of early varieties includes May Queen, Early Ashleaf, Myatt's Prolific Ashleaf, Ninety-fold, Sutton's Ring-leader, Alpha and St. Paul. In the list of Potatoes immune from wart disease just issued by the Board of Agriculture the three following early varieties are recommended for 1917: A 1 (Sutton), Resistant Snowdrop (Dobbie) and Edzell Blue. All three crop well, but the colour of the last named will probably prevent its becoming a popular market variety. This list gives the following well known early varieties as highly susceptible to wart disease, and by an Order of the Board they cannot be planted on infected premises: Early Puritan, Epicure, Midlothian Early, British Queen, Duke of York, Sharpe's Express, Sharpe's Victor, Sir John Llewelyn, Evergood and Cigarette. The maincrop varieties King Edward VII, Up-to-Date, Arran Chief and The Factor also figure among those highly susceptible to this disease.

H. C.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

#### THE INTRODUCTION OF THE LIME TREE.

SIR,—I see that in your interesting editorial reply to a correspondent on the native trees of the British Isles you mention the lime as being one of them. This tree was introduced into England in Elizabeth's reign from Germany, by a man named John Spielman. He settled in Dartford and there introduced the art of paper-making. His crest was a fool's cap, which accounts for the name given to a certain size of paper. Spielman was also jeweller to Her Majesty. He came from Lindau in Germany and brought the lime trees with him.—M. G. S. BEST.

[This account of the introduction of the lime is quoted by Professor Augustine Henry and Mr. Henry John Elwes in their "Trees of Great Britain and Ireland;" but as the trees were cut down before 1769, when they were first mentioned in Hasted's "Kent," it is not known whether they were *Tilia vulgaris* (the common lime)—which, although best known in a cultivated state, is extremely rare wild—or some other variety.—ED.]





Of all the castles of France, and they are reckoned by the thousand, not many are more arresting to the eye and imagination than lordly Hautefort, proudly planted on its limestone bastion, and dominating the waving woods of Born and the rich, populous hill-country of the Corrèze. The nature of its site—a spur commanding the meeting point of several valleys—just the site beloved of the mediæval sparrowhawk for his eyrie—is as well adapted for display as for defence. It would be a mean building, indeed, that could rob it of all its effect. And the lords of Hautefort saw to it that their abode should not be mean. No need here for the delicate arabesques of water-bathed Azay-le-Rideau, nor even for the more masculine if still studied architecture of Mansart at Blois, rock-terraced like Hautefort itself. A fine disposition of bold masses of plain masonry and that element of the picturesque which the quaint silhouettes of high-pitched roofs and domes can add were rightly felt by the unknown architects to be all that was needed to complete the canvas which nature had sketched in with such broad strokes.

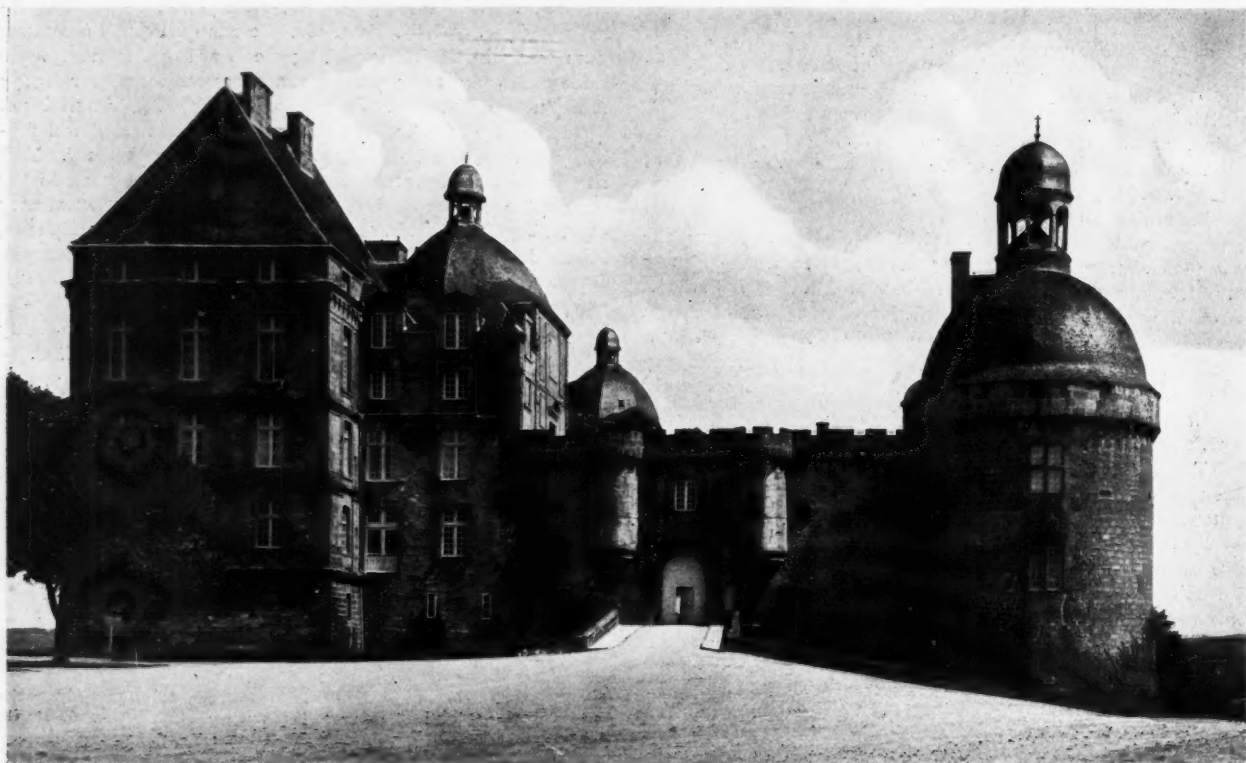
On this side of the Channel few dwellings can trace their history even as far back as the Norman Conquest. But in France the annals of many a great house reach back to the tenth or even an earlier century. This is the case with at least two of the castles that have been illustrated from time to time in these pages: Chaumont-sur-Loire and La Rochefoucauld; and there are documents to show that something in the nature of a castle already crowned the hill of Hautefort in the year 1000. Its then owner was Guy the Black, of the Limousin house of Lastours; and from that time onwards for close upon nine hundred years it passed in unbroken

succession from parent to child, if not invariably from father to son.

Early in the twelfth century Agnes, who inherited it of her brother, Golfier de Lastours, married Itier de Born. The Borns ruled in Hautefort for a hundred years in the male line; and on the death of the last of them, Bertran III, the husband of his sister and heiress, Margaret, Aymer de Faye, of the house of Latour Maubourg, took his wife's name with her estate. The last of their male descendants, another Bertran, died about 1388, leaving a daughter, Mathe, whose second husband, Elie de Gontaut, assumed the arms and title of Hautefort. This branch of the house of Gontaut, while it missed the lustre attained by the elder branch under the names of Biron, Puységilhem and Lauzun, was destined to remain in continuous and quiet possession of Hautefort from Mathe de Born's death in 1424 until, by the marriage of Sigismonde Charlotte, Dame de Hautefort, in 1818, it passed to the family of her husband, the Baron de Damas. On the death of their son in 1887, his widow sold it to the present owner, M. d'Artigues.

In nine long centuries of occupation the lords of a castle of this pre-eminence doubtless played a part proportionate to their local importance in the wars and politics of their province. But it is not to be expected that many out of the long roll of its owners should emerge out of the obscurity of local annals into the light that beats upon the followers of a Court or the makers of a nation's history.

Yet now and again the dull succession of undistinguished generations is broken by a gleam of bravery, of ambition, or of talent beyond the ordinary, and a scion of the house wins for himself or herself a niche in the shrine of Fame. Such, in



early days, was that Golfier de Lastours who distinguished himself by his prowess in the Holy Land in 1126.

But of wider renown than he, if of no greater intrinsic worth, are two members of the house of Hautefort, who, in widely separated ages and surroundings, left the impress of a

other respects, divided as they are by five centuries of national growth and social change, the warrior-troubadour and the ambitious lady-in-waiting are as diverse as the Courts of Richard Cœur-de-Lion and Anne of Austria, in which, respectively, they shone for a moment.



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FROM THE FOSSE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

vivid personality upon the minds of contemporaries. Children of their respective epochs, and typical examples of contemporary manners, Bertran de Born and Marie d'Hautefort have little in common but their home, unless it be a strong devotion to the interests of the feudal caste and a blindness to the influence these exerted on the general welfare. In

Hautefort stands on the borders of Périgord, a land of soft airs and good cheer, of noisy jollity and ready wit, and, in spite of a high rate of illiteracy at the present day, as fertile in literary talent as it is in the fruits of the earth—was it not the *patrie* of both Brantôme and Montaigne? But if writers such as these, men of the Court and of travel and





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THE CHATEAU FROM THE VILLAGE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE ENTRANCE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

education, necessarily used the dialect of the northern capital when they wrote for other than local readers, the old "langue d'oc" has never ceased to be the speech of the people, and till within living memory even of the upper classes. Périgord was one of the centres of old Provençal song, and Bertran de Born, who was born, or at any rate lived, at Haute-fort, is a poet whose works are held by connoisseurs, if a little rough and unequal in style, to be only inferior to the masterpieces of Peire Vidal and Gérard de Borneil of Toulouse, and he has been called the Provençal Tyrtæus, but, unlike his prototype, he seems to have been more sparing of his person than of his verse in the causes he espoused. He does not appear to have been the patriot with large views of a united and independent South which some have painted him, but rather a turbulent spirit, intent on lands and feudal rights; and, though in his earlier poems he celebrates the delights of war and his determination to uphold his right, he seems to have had *flair* for the moment at which it was advantageous to change sides, or up to which it was politic to make a stand. This trait of his character may not have been foreign to the ease with which Haute-fort — esteemed *castrum valde inexpugnabile* — fell when attacked; and it is probable that spirited as was his war song calling on the knights of Aquitaine to strike for Christendom against the Infidel, he showed no disposition to wear the cross on his own shoulders.

Joint heirs of Haute-fort, he and his brother soon fell out, and after a struggle Bertran remained in possession. But Constantine called his suzerain Richard, Count of Poitou, to his assistance; whereupon Bertran, in self defence, attached himself to the cause of Richard's brother, Henry Curtmantel, Duke of Aquitaine, with whom Cœur-de-Lion was then at feud. In a rousing *sirvente* he made a bid for the help of the neighbouring barons, whose names in his verse ring out like a clarion call: "Ventadour and Comborn, Puygilhem,



Clarensac and Astier." But it was in vain; Richard was soon battering at his gates, and after a brief resistance Bertran made his submission and became his conqueror's henchman: at one time beating up volunteers for his Crusade in stirring stanzas, hot with contempt for the barons who should fail to follow; at another making love poems at the Court of Richard's sister, Matilda of Saxony, at Argentan, or a dirge on the death of their brother, Henry, with the refrain: "Ah! the young English King!" or yet again abetting the rebel princes in their unnatural contest against the old king their father.

It was this last act of Bertran's which won him the dubious boon of immortality in the pages of Dante. In the 28th Canto of the "Inferno," with that terrible and grotesque realism which bites into the imagination, the great poet describes how he saw the headless form of the troubadour pacing his appointed round carrying his own head by the hair "swung as a lantern from his hand":

He raised his arm aloft  
with all the head,  
To bring the words nigh  
to me, which it spake  
"Behold the grievous penalty,  
O thou  
That, breathing, farest  
forth to view the dead!  
Behold, if any be so sore  
as mine!  
And know, if thou wouldst  
carry news of me,  
That Bertran, lord of Bore  
am I, the same  
Who gave the counsel ill  
to that young king,  
Which set the father and  
the son at strife.  
With traitorous goadings  
thus Ahitophel  
By Absalom and by David  
wrought amiss  
For that I thus departed  
branch and stem  
I bear, alack! departed  
from its source  
My brain, that, in this  
lopped trunk, the law  
Of retribution be made  
manifest."

About 1196 Bertran de Born became a monk in the Abbey of Dalon, where he died and was buried some ten years later. Generation succeeded generation. His castle—altered and rebuilt from time to time—passed from one family to another, and in the year 1616 was born in it to the house of Hautefort a daughter, Marie, who was destined to play a somewhat conspicuous part in her day, too.

From the death of Henry IV to the coming of age of Louis XIV French history presents the curious spectacle of a number of high-born women, remarkable for their beauty, their wit or their talent for intrigue, passing and repassing across the stage, tilting at the established government, plotting with foreign Powers, weaving intricate Court conspiracies, and even marching at the head of armed forces. Prompted in turn by personal likes and dislikes, by vanity, gallantry or revenge, by ambition or mere love of adventure, they all share one underlying conviction, that nobles have an

indefeasible right to treat France as their plaything, a right on which it was not permissible for King or Cardinal to set a curb.

Such, in their several fashions, were the Duchess of Chevreuse, the Princess Palatine, Madame de Longueville and the Grande Mademoiselle. Such, on a more restricted scale, and, consequently, capable of less mischief, was Marie d'Hautefort. From her childish days she prayed that it might be granted her to live at the Court. Heaven heard her prayer only too well for her happiness. An elderly relative of her



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EAST WING FROM ROUND TOWER OF 1588.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

mother's, who was on the suite of Marie de' Medici, obtained a place for her in the Queen-Mother's household at the early age of fourteen. Shortly afterwards, while the Court was at Lyons, Louis XIII remarked the tall girl with clear-cut features, a dazzling complexion, deep blue eyes full of fire, and masses of waving, golden hair. His attentions were so marked that they excited the jealousy of the young Queen, Anne of Austria, who had, perhaps, not yet discovered that her morose husband desired, not a mistress, but merely a sympathetic audience—male or female, it mattered not—for his peevish maunderings about the ministers who would not let him have his own way, or

about the technicalities of his hobbies of hunting, cookery and music. Be that as it may, the large-hearted uprightness of Mademoiselle d'Hautefort soon won the esteem of Anne, who obtained her transfer to her own household. Her position at Court thus became one of great influence. She used it to encourage her mistress in foolish intrigues against the policy of Richelieu, who lost no time in eliminating her by putting forward a rival. Louis XIII, a little chilled by Mademoiselle d'Hautefort's brusque frankness, turned with relief to the yielding gentleness of Mademoiselle de la Fayette, and Marie fell into disfavour. After a time a celebrated but obscure incident occurred.

last long, and again she lost the position of king's confidante through the rise into the royal graces of the brainless young fop, Cinq Mars. After a short struggle she gave way and withdrew into private life.

On the King's death Marie was recalled. She returned with high hopes, only to find her influence gone. Mazarin now filled a greater place in the Queen's heart than she had ever done, and when the old favourite began to intrigue against the new her fate was sealed. She was forbidden the Court, and Anne raised not a finger to retain one who, on more than one occasion, had rendered her important services. The most signal of these was to have averted the consequences of an

intrigue the Queen had set on foot with the Spanish Government by penetrating into the Bastille, at considerable risk to herself, and there recovering from one Laporte a highly compromising letter from the Queen which he was carrying to the Netherlands when he was arrested.

Mademoiselle d'Hautefort, after her second disgrace, married the Count of Schomberg - Halluin, an elderly widower, cousin of the famous general who fell at the Boyne. On his death, after ten years of childless marriage, she retired to a convent, from which she emerged but once to visit Anne of Austria on her deathbed. Her conduct on this occasion illustrates the leading traits of her character, her genuine humanity and her propensity to deliver herself of almost brutal home-truths. Seeing the Queen's ladies worn out with standing in the royal presence, she obtained permission from their dying mistress for cushions to be laid on the floor for them to sit upon; then, on being asked by the Queen, who lay wasted by cancer, why she gazed so earnestly upon her, she replied: "I am thinking, Madam, of the change I see in your Majesty's person. That which was once the most beautiful and delicate body is now in that state in which God wills it to



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IN THE SALLE A MANGER.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Mademoiselle d'Hautefort was seen to be smuggling a note, which, on being pressed by the King to give it up, she dropped into her bosom. Whereupon the Queen held her hands while Louis extricated it from her bodice with a pair of silver tongs. Much ado was made at the time about this trifling episode, and the most various constructions placed by Court quidnuncs on the motives of the actors in it; but, since the contents and destination of the note and the name of the writer are alike unknown, further speculation is futile. The only certainty about the business is that it resulted in a period of renewed favour for the heroine. This was not destined to

be." Anne cast her eyes heavenward, but made no reply to these harsh words. Madame de Schomberg withdrew once more to her religious house, where, in this respect resembling Bertran de Born, she died long after full of years and forgotten of the world.

Of the castle of the troubadour baron nothing now remains but a few courses of bold masonry bedded on the rock and forming part of the substructures of later work. The building probably did not pass through the later Middle Ages without changes and additions, but the character and plan of all this early work cannot now be determined in detail in view of the

extensive remodelling of the sixteenth and rebuilding of the seventeenth century.

The general arrangement, however, of the old fortress is still clear. Hautefort, as it has already been pointed out, occupies a spur easily accessible only from its point of junction with the high ground from which it juts—the difficulties have, of course, been eliminated by the construction in modern times of a road of easy gradient. The position was similar to that of the great medieval fortress of Pierrefond. And, in the same manner as there, the castle was secured on its vulnerable side by an artificial dry-moat spanned by bridge and drawbridge, which, in their later form, can still be seen. Outside this the ground was levelled and fortified with a parapet and probably other outworks as a first line of defence.

When we come to the castle itself we find the plan regularised into the form customary at the period of rebuilding—a rectangular court enclosed between the main building and two advancing wings. The point in which it differs from the majority of its type is that the entrance is placed in one of these wings and not in the fourth side, which, in this case, is occupied by a balustrade on the edge of the steep overlooking the village clustered at its feet. An exactly similar arrangement—occasioned by the same conditions of site—occurs at Louppy in Lorraine, at the present moment in enemy hands. By a curious coincidence the entrance gateways of both châteaux are very close to each other both in date and design.

The projecting wings, one of which contains this *porte cochère* and both of which end in circular towers, were



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remodelled in 1588, the towers being heightened at that period and crowned with domes of shimmering grey slates. The main building itself, which bounds the left side of the courtyard, consists of a rectangular *corps-de-logis* flanked by two oblong pavilions, from each of which projects a lesser pavilion surmounted by a quaint eight-sided dome set anglewise and capped by a slender *lanternon*. The outer façade, a view of which the configuration of the ground renders unobtainable, measures some 220ft. in length. The bulk of these buildings dates from the early years of the seventeenth century and are the work of Marie d'Hautefort's brother, for whose benefit the *seigneurie* was erected into a marquisate in 1614.

Many of the rooms are finely decorated in the manner of that period, but the clumsiness of the carved figures shows that a sculptor equal in merit to the designer was not forthcoming in this remote province. In the saloon, an apartment

measuring about 70ft. by 40ft., the main feature of the decoration, apart from the monumental chimney-piece, is a series of cartoons painted on canvas, more or less in imitation of tapestry, executed at Beauvais by Le Prince. They are of the type known as *Chinoiserie*; the most celebrated is known as the *Tasse de thé*. In the chapel are two series of tapestries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries respectively, representing the Last Judgment and the Marriage of Louis XII and Anne of Brittany, and another *Salon* is hung with landscapes in Gobelin tapestry. Such furniture of interest as the château possesses was brought there by the Damas family.

W. H. WARD.

## INCREASING OUR FIGHTING FORCES BY MILLIONS

BY JOHN ALFRED JORDAN.

"WIN the war with black men," my friend repeated after me; "but that's impossible. The country wouldn't stand it." "Why not?" was my reply. "We are out to win, and if the French have seen fit to use Senegalese warriors from West Africa, why should the British hesitate about using black troops with which the Germans have so frequently announced we are fighting? Give these natives clubs of the weight and shape of the weapon to which they are accustomed. With them they can hit at a distance a bird on the wing; and if the weapon we supply were really an explosive bomb, every one would find its billet."

The conversation which followed gave my friend something to think about, and at his suggestion I am setting forth the substance of it for a larger public. For seventeen years immediately preceding the outbreak of war I was brought into daily contact and occasional conflict with these peoples with whose mode of life, customs and languages I am intimately familiar.

I will take the most warlike tribes in sequence. The Masai have, among Europeans who have visited East Africa, the name for being the supreme fighting forces there. They are split up into several factions, Olbruggo, Loita, Uasin guishu, Njemps and Samburu. They can endure all sorts of hardships,

and think nothing of marches of forty miles; they are trained in strict military order, and well understand discipline and obedience. They are formed in companies, each answering to its own name. The youths of a certain age would be called "Five hundred"; the next the "Invincibles," then the "Buffaloes," and so on. When they attack they send five or six companies to start the engagement while the others are held in reserve. When their leaders see the first companies are not getting the better of the fight, or are getting tired, they launch fresh companies, the first falling back to regain their strength. In like manner the second companies may be recalled, and the third sent to throw their new strength on the enemy, and so on until they have the foe vanquished. Their arms consist of a long stabbing-spear, a 2ft. 6in. two-edged sword, and a club with spikes fashioned out of the roots of a particularly hard shrub. They guard themselves with a strong buffalo-hide shield, and are very highly trained in the use of their weapons. They do not mind the cold weather, and sleep out in the open in the coldest places where a white man's teeth would be chattering. From this source the authorities could obtain 20,000 picked warriors.

It should be borne in mind that in native warfare there is no question of reducing the enemy by long-range artillery and rifle fire; it is a matter of personal prowess at close



quarters; man to man; cold steel to cold steel; and it is the fact that this close-quarter personal conflict is the natural and only method they are used to which I wish to emphasise.

Next on the list are the Nandi, whom, from my own observations, I consider far superior to the Masai and more on a footing with the Zulus. We have had two wars against these people, and they have proved their ability to fight against modern guns and trained soldiers, although only armed with their primitive weapons. In the first Nandi Expedition they not only raided right along the railway line, but charged straight through a barbed wire stockade while the Maxim guns were playing on them, and recovered their stock which our forces had captured from them.

This tribe could supply 20,000 of the finest material; stalwart, clean-limbed athletes, quick to learn, as the few who have joined the European-trained native regiments have demonstrated by turning out good shots and readily understanding and submitting to discipline. The Lumbwa and Sotick are of the same race, living south of the Nandi, the only difference between them being lingual, a few words slightly differing in their dialects. From these tribes there could be recruited quite 40,000 men in the prime of life. The Elgeyo, Mutey, Maraquet, Teroise and Kamasai are nearly the same stamp of people as the Nandi and Lumbwa, and speak the same language. These five tribes together could produce 50,000 first-class fighters. All the tribes of this race live in cold climates and are extremely good hunters and cunning fighters. They all use the stabbing-spear, short sword and club, like the Masai.

The next in the sequence of warlike tribes are the Suke and Turkana, who could be called on for about 20,000 men. They use the throwing-spear and carry a small shield 2ft. long and 1ft. wide, made out of rhinoceros hide. The Suke are a small race, but tough and averaging about 5ft. in height; but the Turkana run to nearly 6ft. Both tribes are excellent fighters. The Wakamba are also a very strong tribe, and used to more than hold their own when attacked by the terrible Masai. They could easily produce 40,000 or 50,000 men, fit for strenuous service. They are mostly armed with a bow and poisoned arrows and are very skilful and accurate shots with these weapons. The boys start practising at the age of four or five years, and hold competitions against one another, each small lad being very keen to prove himself the most proficient shot of his class; therefore, from almost babyhood they learn to be quick of eye and accurate of aim, never failing to keep on practising all through their lives. Owing to this it should be extremely easy to train these men to use a rifle.

The next in fighting quality to these people are the Kikuyu, who try to copy the Masai as much as possible in the making of their arms and equipment. They occupy a territory extending hundreds of miles, and have many big villages and are a very populous people; there would be no difficulty in their supplying about 60,000 fighters. Some of these people live on the slopes of Mount Kenia, which is extremely wild and cold, the highest points being always covered with snow.

The Kisi, a people situated between the Lumbwa and Kavirondo Tribes, are one of the most independent and greatest of fighting races. About eleven years ago our Government decided that it was time they started paying hut-tax, but the natives did not see it in the same light, so an expedition was sent against them. They put up a very good fight, and it took a few months to subdue them. They are armed with throwing-spears and bows and arrows, and are quite accustomed to the old muzzle-loading guns, which they have captured during many raids against the Arab slave-traders. They are a strong and finely built race and would easily supply up to 50,000 men.

The Kavirondo, who live round the shores of Lake Victoria Nyanza and towards the Uganda frontier, are a stalwart race. The men, women, and children go quite naked, and are considered the most moral tribe in East Africa. The men average quite 6ft.; they carry enormous Buffalo hide shields, weighing quite thirty pounds, also peculiarly long spears. They make the spears themselves, hammering the iron out and fashioning the wood. The accuracy of the balance is marvellous, especially when one realises that it is all done by primitive means, no modern tools being used at all. From here could be obtained a band of close on 60,000 warriors.

In Uganda you have the Baganda, Usoga, and Bukadi, who could easily supply 100,000 men. Large numbers of these have been in the habit of using rifles. Many of them live on the slopes of Mount Ruwenzori, where it is very cold at night, and would be little affected by European temperatures. The

figures I have given of the numbers of the different tribes available are confined to those I consider in the prime of life and medically fit.

Owing to our knowledge of the conditions and requirements of modern warfare it seems to me that training these men in the scientific methods of what might be called the "Marching, pipe-claying and starching" school would be a waste of valuable time. What I would suggest is that their natural adaptability for hand-to-hand conflict should be taken advantage of and developed. It is in the assault on a prepared position that their forces would show their superiority; and when it is a question of bayonet against stabbing-spears I know which I would back.

I would arm them with bullet-proof shields, stabbing-spears of the finest steel, and bombs fashioned in the shape of their clubs, which training has made them so extremely skilful in throwing that they rarely miss the object they aim at.

I would form them into regiments officered by Europeans and composed of companies of different tribes. This would develop a spirit of company emulation and regimental *esprit-de-corps*. After a strong artillery bombardment their mighty rushes would carry everything before them, and I am certain that once they got among the enemy and it came to hand-to-hand fighting with their weapons against the bayonet, in addition to the suggested club-shaped grenade, their superiority would be effectively demonstrated.

The question of language would naturally arise, but this should be easily overcome. There must be among the Arabs and Swahili traders now living on the coast many who have been soldiers in the army who, when their term of service was finished, became traders. During their military and trading expeditions they would have mixed with all the tribes in question and learnt their languages and dialects. These men would make valuable non-commissioned officers. Many of the European settlers are now highly trained men who would make excellent commissioned officers. They would understand their men, having lived among them or near them for years, in many cases speaking their language.

These forces could easily be sent to Mesopotamia or the Balkans from East Africa. The difficulties of the country in the Balkans would not deter them. They are accustomed to hills and plains; and their natural quickness of eye in reading and taking advantage of the configurations of the ground or cover would enable them, as skirmishers, to worry and harass the enemy beyond endurance. The feeding of these men would not be a great difficulty either; they are great meat eaters, and if they have plenty of rice, it is all they require.

I have only dealt with our East African Colony, and when one considers the other enormous fields open for recruiting in South, Central and North Africa, it is not difficult to see how comparatively easy it would be to obtain an army of about 3,000,000 men requiring very little training, no luxurious housing, catering or pay, and composed of some of the finest fighters in the world who would be eager and proud to do battle for the "Great White King."

Sentimentalists may turn up their eyes and raise their hands in horror at these suggestions, but is it not to the visionaries, theorists and sentimentalists that we owe a large portion of our unpreparedness for war? And what are they doing to help us in this struggle for our national and imperial existence? Again, what would Germany have done if she had had these millions of fighters at her command?

This war is a case of national life or death, which has to be fought to a finish; and when one reviews the stupendous loss in blood and treasure which we and our Allies have suffered, and are likely to continue indefinitely to suffer, except some preponderating force can be brought to bear upon our enemies, it appears, in my humble judgment, criminal not to use all the means to conquer within our reach.

#### WHERE THE WILD GEESE FEED

Take me to where the wild-geese feed,  
And the river meets the sea,  
Where the wet, grey mists rise silently  
To a greyer sky. For I have need  
To hear once more the beat of wings  
Breasting the tides that call to me—  
Take me to where the wild-geese feed,  
And the river meets the sea.

MARJORIE KENNEDY-ERSKINE.

# WHAT ARCHITECTS HAVE DONE IN THE WAR



**CAPT. MAURICE E. WEBB. 2ND LIEUT. PHILIP E. WEBB.**  
*Royal Engineers.*  
*Past-President, Architectural Assoc.*



*Royal Engineers.*  
*Killed in action.*



**MR. A. G. R. MACKENZIE.**  
*Lost a leg at Ypres.*  
*President, Architectural Association.*



**CAPT. G. M. MACKENZIE.**  
*3rd Seaforth Highlanders.*  
*Killed near Kut.*

**F**OUR months after the outbreak of war we published an article on the splendid spirit which architects as a body had shown in rallying to the national cause. Now after twenty-nine months of conflict a more complete record can be given. The Royal Institute of British Architects has done its best to mobilise for national service the wealth of constructive and organising ability represented by its body of members. There has been a rather disappointing response from Government authorities to the Institute's offers of service. This may be due partly to the fact that architecture is not a "closed" profession like law and medicine, and consequently the Institute, its senior representative body, does not carry the weight with official persons to which its importance entitles it. Be that as it may, its members and those of the Society of Architects have not only done nobly in a military sense, but have played a fine part in promoting the efficient conduct of the war by filling many technical posts of high importance. The Architectural Association, representing the interests of the youngest men in the profession, has been compelled by force of circumstances to reduce its educational labours to a minimum, but before compulsory military service was adopted its War Service Bureau recruited about two thousand men. The Association is also staffing the Forty-third

London Voluntary Aid Detachment of the Red Cross Society.

When we turn to the personal contribution of the profession we find that very nearly three thousand architects are serving with the King's forces, and that already the names on the ultimate Roll of Honour make a long list. Of the members of the Royal Institute of British Architects, two Fellows, twenty-nine Associates, nine Licentiates, and twenty-one Students have made the final sacrifice. Of that noble company are also eleven members of the Society, forty-three members of the Association, and about thirty belonging to provincial organisations. Already this list includes many names well known and honoured in the profession. Sir Aston Webb, R.A., has lost his youngest son, Second Lieutenant Philip Webb, Royal Engineers, who fell on September 25th when engaged on a difficult enterprise in a forward position. Captain Gilbert Marshall Mackenzie, son and partner of Mr. A. Marshall Mackenzie, A.R.S.A., was in the Special Reserve of Officers, Seaforth Highlanders. Mobilised on the outbreak of war he served through the Great Retreat and was wounded at Ypres in April, 1915. Going afterwards to Mesopotamia he was killed on Good Friday of 1916 in one of the desperate attempts to relieve the forces besieged in Kut.



**THE FIRST ARCHITECT V.C.**  
**CAPT. FRANKLAND BELL.**  
*Killed in action.*



**LIEUT. W. G. NEWTON. MAJ. PHILLIPS FLETCHER, D.S.O.**  
*Severely wounded.*  
*Has won Military Cross*



*Croix de Guerre.*  
*Killed on Active Service*



**CAPTAIN NOEL HADWEN.**  
*Duke of Wellington's Regiment.*  
*Killed in action.*



**2ND LIEUT. A. HORSNELL.**  
*Suffolk Regiment.*  
*Killed in action.*



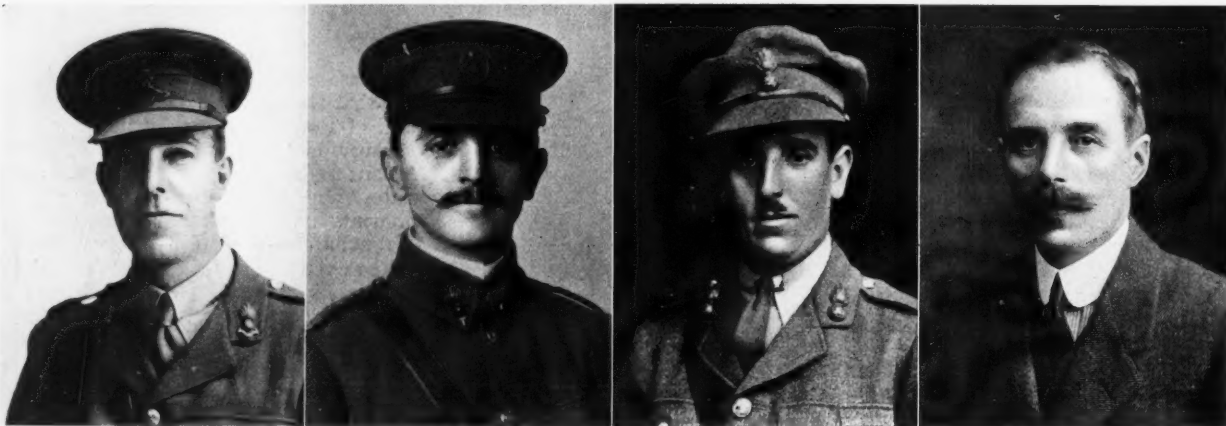
Captain Hillyer, Royal Engineers, was the first member of the Architectural Association to receive the Military Cross. This distinction was won for conspicuous gallantry and devotion in mining operations on Hill 60 during April, 1915. As the official record says, "His pluck and endurance were remarkable and resulted in the successful explosion of the mine and subsequent capture of the Hill." Unhappily, he did not long enjoy his honour, for he fell on March 22nd, 1916. The late Major H. Phillips Fletcher, Middlesex Hussars, was a striking example of the way in which a man after twenty successful years in a civilian career has shown especial brilliance and courage under the strain of war. Sent to Egypt with his regiment he was seconded for service with the French Air Service, and for four months acted as observer in aerial reconnaissances and in bomb dropping attacks on Turkish positions. For this he received the coveted *Croix de Guerre*. In August last the *London Gazette* announced that the D.S.O. had been conferred on him, but a fortnight before he had been killed in a flying accident. Mr. E. Guy Dawber has lost his partner in the late Captain Noël Hadwen, Duke of Wellington's Regiment.

Among the most able of the younger generation of architects was Alick Horsnell, Second-Lieutenant, Suffolk Regiment. Horsnell had been Tite prizeman and Soane medallist. He showed brilliant gifts both as perspective draughtsman and as etcher, and his work was very familiar on the walls of the Architecture Room at the Royal Academy. His output, in terms of actual building, had been small, for he was a young man, but he was recognised as one of the architectural forces of the future, both by his mastery of

man had had his arm blown off at another listening post, practically unapproachable by daylight. Lieutenant Venmore again undertook to go to his aid, once more taking with him Corporal Williams. They crawled across the open ground in the face of heavy machine-gun fire. The sufferer was reached, his wounds attended to, and he was subsequently brought to safety.

Unhappily, Lieutenant Venmore was killed in action in July last. When Second Lieutenant Frank S. Chesterton, Royal Field Artillery, fell in November last after only twenty-four hours in the fighting line, the profession lost a man whose enthusiasm for his art and progressive achievement had marked him out for a very eminent place. A tireless student and a man of fine character, his sacrifice leaves a gap which will not readily be filled.

We come to happier records when we set down the services of those who have not been called on to give up their lives. A fine impression was created at the beginning of the war among the younger men by the enlistment in the ranks of the Royal Engineers of Mr. Maurice Webb, elder son of Sir Aston Webb, and at that time President of the Architectural Association. Where he led hundreds of others were quick to follow. In due course he received a commission and now holds the rank of Captain. He served in Gallipoli from July, 1915, until just before the evacuation, took part in the landing at Suvla Bay, and was mentioned in despatches. He is now in a neighbouring theatre of the war. Mr. A. G. R. Mackenzie, the elder son of Mr. A. Marshall Mackenzie, went to the front as a private in the London Scottish. He happily escaped the fate of his gallant brother, but was severely wounded at the first battle of



2ND LT. F. S. CHESTERTON.  
*Royal Artillery.*  
*Killed in action.*

MAJOR PETER G. FRY.  
*Royal Engineers.*  
*Has won the D.S.O.*

LIEUT. J. F. VENMORE.  
*Military Cross.*  
*Killed in action.*

2ND LIEUT. W. H. WARD.  
*West Yorkshire Regiment.*

design and by the power of a personality no less impressive because it was concealed by a retiring disposition.

To the School of Architecture of Liverpool University belongs the honour of yielding the first architect to receive the Victoria Cross. Captain Eric Frankland Bell, Royal Inniskillings, did not live to receive the greatest of all military distinctions. He fell in July last, and the award was notified in the *Gazette* of September 26th. This is the fine record:

He was in command of a trench mortar battery, and advanced with the infantry in the attack. When our front line was hung up by enfilading machine-gun fire, Captain Bell crept forward and shot the machine gunner. Later, on three occasions, when bombing parties, which were clearing enemy's trenches, were unable to advance, he went forward alone and threw trench mortar bombs among the enemy. When he had no more bombs he stood on the parapet, under intense fire, and used a rifle with great coolness and effect on the enemy advancing to counter-attack. Finally he was killed rallying and reorganising infantry parties which had lost their officers. All this was outside the scope of his normal duties with the battery. He gave his life in his supreme devotion to duty.

Among his associates at the Liverpool School was Lieutenant Venmore, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, who received the Military Cross for conspicuous bravery in the field.

On the night of January 30th last he was on duty as patrol officer, when a sentry in the firing trench reported that three men in an advanced listening post had been wounded. Two of these men were just able to crawl back to the British lines over the barbed wire, but the third man was too seriously wounded to follow, being shot through both legs. Lieutenant Venmore volunteered to go to his assistance, and took with him a non-commissioned officer, Corporal William Williams. They went out under heavy fire over the parapet, and after great difficulty successfully brought in the man over the wire and two ditches. This brave action was succeeded by a further gallant act on the following morning, when a message was received that a

Ypres in October, 1914, and has lost a leg. Very appropriately he now fills the office held by Captain Maurice Webb at the outbreak of war, that of President of the Architectural Association. Lieutenant W. G. Newton, son of Mr. Ernest Newton, A.R.A., President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, has been seriously wounded after winning the Military Cross, and is now acting as adjutant to a battalion of the London Regiment. Captain H. P. G. Maule's hundreds of friends rejoiced when he received the Military Cross. As master of the Architectural Association Day School his enthusiasm was of the utmost value to the students of many years. Long an ardent Territorial, he went soon to the front as company sergeant-major in the Honourable Artillery Company, no mean honour in so historic a regiment. After much service in the trenches he received his commission, and his professional abilities were soon put to good use in a staff appointment concerned with maintaining the health of the Army. As Captain Maule's own friends do not know for what especial services he wears the Military Cross, the story cannot be set down. Major Peter G. Fry, Royal Engineers, a member of the Society of Architects, was, we believe, the first member of the profession to receive the D.S.O.; and Major Wighman Douglas of the same regiment and the same society has won the like award.

It has been impossible yet to compile a complete record of the honours won by soldier architects, and it has therefore not been attempted here; but the list is long and honourable to a profession which might claim Inigo Jones as a Royal Engineer, for he helped in the defence of Basing House, and Wren as a citizen soldier, for he preceded Captain Maule as a member of the Honourable Artillery



Company. We have been concerned rather to show, by mentioning mainly soldiers whose names are known to our readers as architects by their work illustrated in COUNTRY LIFE, how well the profession has done. In this connection the name of Second Lieutenant W. H. Ward, West Yorkshire Regiment, must not be omitted, for not only have several of his houses appeared in these pages, but he has contributed many articles on the subject which he has made

peculiarly his own, the Renaissance buildings of France. After a spell in the trenches and a bout of illness, Lieutenant Ward was seconded for duties in which his professional skill and French scholarship had freer play.

What we have written is a sketch rather than a record, but it should be enough to show that architecture has been no laggard in yielding of her best in the hour of the nation's need.

LAWRENCE WEAVER.

## LITERATURE

**Charles Lister.** Letters and Recollections, with a Memoir by his Father, Lord Ribblesdale. (Fisher Unwin.)

IN reading Lord Ribblesdale's memorial to his son it is impossible not to feel that in this instance we see a type of the loss which Great Britain, like every one of the belligerent countries, has suffered in this war. It was very common three years ago to hear thoughtless people lament the wretched falling away in the young men that were coming on. Such lamentations are as old as humanity itself. Those who have been brought up under one set of circumstances and accomplished something of what they set out to do are very apt to look with critical eyes upon those who follow. To them the days past seem ever greater than the present. Some of us, however, always believed, and it is comforting to remember how often the opinion has been expressed in these pages, that the younger generation is a great generation. The deduction was drawn from their general manliness, their chivalry taught them in their games, the abstemiousness which characterises the youth of the twentieth century as compared with those who have been in the same position at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Physically it was evident that the boys were splendid. If so much was not thought of what is not physical it was because modesty and absence of side or boasting had been inculcated with their mother's milk. The arrogant young man of the Junker type in Germany had disappeared from this country, although we have only to turn to the novels of Jane Austen to see that he was a living personality at the Battle of Waterloo. They have passed through very crucial days, but the young men have emerged from it in a manner to evoke the admiration of the entire world, and no class has had the monopoly of heroes. Youths who were toiling in the fields now wear clasps and medals won by valour and self-devotion. Charles Lister, then, belongs to a noble company. In days to come it will never be forgotten that in time of the country's need the squire and the labourer fought together, and in many cases died together. Charles Lister represents what has foolishly been called "the governing class." His life previous to the outbreak of war followed the course which is usual among children of such a family as that to which he belonged. His father tells us, with loving detail, how he grew up into a country boy fond of rabbits, goats, guinea-pigs, mice and the other creatures which children make pets of. There is an interesting reference to Charles "showing Mr. Gladstone a Natural History book with five coloured plates and explaining the habits of the more obscure animals." In due time he was sent to Eton, where a friend describes him in the following passage:

He was seventeen. His figure was tall and slender. The head, which may be described as pear-shaped, was framed by closely curling hair. The complexion was uniform and pale, the features delicate. The eyes, which were blue, were both frank and observant—the frankness was for the person he spoke to, the observation was turned outward; when speaking his eyebrows went up. His chief distinction among the scholarly band of his friend's was to be totally free from self-consciousness.

In character he was fearless, a good rider, and his first pony was bought from Sir Richard Graham of Norton Conyers. Later on he rode a fine horse called "Whirlygig."

Lister's letters from Germany between 1909 and 1911 will be read with great interest now, as will also his Rumanian letters and Indian letters, and the pre-war letters from Constantinople. They all come from an alert, vivacious mind which apprehended that movement of affairs which was to end in the Great War. When he was in the East Lister visited many places that were historic then and have become more historic now. Monastir he finds "a nice little Turkish country town in the middle of a large plain with mountains all round. I stayed there one day only, and in the morning went to see the battlefield." On July 25th, 1914, he was at Therapia. He writes to Mrs. Hamlyn:

We are, by the time you get this, probably in the thick of a most difficult time abroad. Serbia and Austria *aux prises*, and a conflict raging which it will be most difficult to localise. Every one here seems to think war is certain. The Austrian Note is worded in such a way as to make its acceptance by Serbia impossible. It is a very strong order. This moment, from Austria's point of view, is a good one. The longer she waits the worse it will be for her.

In another letter written from the same address he describes anti-Russian feeling in Germany as being very strong. At that time the Germans thought the war would be localised, that the Russians would accept their slap in the face and do very little for their Serbian friends, and it was not anticipated that Great Britain would come in. In an undated letter he writes from the British Embassy, Constantinople:

I am much relieved that we have come in; and our state of suspense as to whether we were going to do the right thing or not was very acute. I believe the Germans thought we were for peace at any price and would never dream of chipping in, even if they violated Belgian neutrality, which we had always told them would constitute a *casus belli*.

I feel we are in a very strong position, and even if the Germans get to Paris, we and the Russians can continue the war till we have crushed Germany.

The Turks are very cross with us now, and we may all have to come home—if the Germans manage to rush them (the Turks) into war with Russia; a dirty one and played with characteristic cynicism.

It is manifest Turkey is faced with certain disaster if she makes war on the Triple Entente.

On August 20th he writes in an almost pessimistic strain that he hoped that the French resistance, with us to help them, might have stayed the German advance. Our part in the big battle, he fears, "has been fine, but tragic." But his natural pluck rises above the badness of the circumstances:

We have had black weeks before, and lived through them, and, as in the days of Napoleon, there is our fleet between us and a rapid fall to the status of a second-class power, so we can still hold our heads high, and I think we are rather at our best in this kind of situation. We are much where we were after Austerlitz, though the *débâcle* of our Continental allies is not nearly so complete: and we can look with faith to our Trafalgar.

On September 6th he writes to his father:

I am afraid the war will last a long time, as we shall have to wear the Germans down by degrees. The German Ambassador here says they have food for three years. I don't think this can be true, but no doubt it will take a long time to starve them out.

On the 13th of the same month he writes to the Hon. Irene Lawley:

How vilely all my old associates, Keir Hardie and Co., are behaving.

On September 20th he writes to the Hon. Beatrix Lister that he gathers from what the German Ambassador has said at Constantinople that the Germans meant as early as July to declare war on Russia and all other comers.

The next stage in his life is that in which he was training with the Middlesex Yeomanry in Norfolk. His first letter from Mundesley-on-Sea is dated November 14th, 1914, and the last one from the same address is February 7th, 1915. Then he sailed with the *Franconia* from Tilbury to Port Said. During his service with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, he saw a good deal of Rupert Brooke and his brother. The death of the latter he describes very finely:

Rupert Brooke died of blood-poisoning caused by a germ called the *Pneumo coccus*. He had been rather pulled down at Port Said and suffered from the sea, so the *p. c.* had a favourable field to work in. There was no doubt as to his fate; he died within twenty-four hours of the ill making itself manifest. He was buried in an olive-grove hidden in a ravine thick with scrub that runs from a stony mountain down to the sea. The grave is under an olive-tree that bends over it like a weeping angel. A sad end to such dazzling purity of mind and work, clean cut, classical, and unaffected all the time like his face, unfurrowed or lined by cares. And the eaglet had begun to beat his wings and soar. Perhaps the Island of Achilles is in some respects a suitable resting-place for those bound for the plains of Troy.



Rupert's was certainly a perfect death, and a very fitting close to a fine life; but it is rather a bitter thought that he should have seen none of the soldiering he had devoted himself to with such ardour, and that the gift made so gladly should have been accepted before Experience gave him any return. For any one with a mind alive, this war is primarily a search after the new, and appeals keenly to one's sense of curiosity.

Of the landing at Gallipoli; his wounds, splendidly borne; his gay and gallant conduct in action; and his death, we have left no room to speak. But perhaps enough has been said to give some idea of the fine young Englishman, sportsman and soldier, whose life was yielded up so early for the sake of his country.

### LITERARY NOTES

NEVER in the present century has the spirit of Drake, which is the spirit of the English Navy, found better utterance than in Captain Hopwood's "The Old Way" (Murray). His only parallel is Miss Meugens'

"O Seaman of old the shadowy gates  
Ope wide to let you through."

The best poem is that which gives its name to the volume, and is rightly placed first. It is a piece more delicately carved than verses on similar themes that yielded delight to our forefathers, "Of Nelson and the North sing the glorious day's renown" and "'Twas in Trafalgar Bay, We saw the Frenchman lay," but under its polish is at least an equal vigour. Here is an extract which will probably send the reader a-seeking of the context:

"Came a gruff and choking chuckle, and a craft as black as doom  
Lumbered laughing down to leeward, as the bravest gave her room.  
'Set 'un blazin', good your Lordship, for the tide be makin' strong  
Proper breeze to fan a fireship, set 'un drivin' out along!"

'Tis the "Torch," wi' humble duty, from Lord Howard 'board the "Ark"  
We'm a laughin'-stock to Brixham, but a terror after dark,  
Hold an' bilge anigh to burstin', pitch and sulphur, tar an' all,  
Was it so, my dear, they'm fashioned for my Lord High Admiral."

"Cried the Breeze: 'You'd hardly know it from the old way  
(Gloriana, did you waken at the fight?).  
Stricken shadows, scared and flying in the old way  
From the swift destroying spectres of the night,  
There were some that steamed and scattered south for safety  
From the mocking western echo "Where be tu?"  
There were some that—got the message—in the old way,  
And the flashes in the darkness spoke of you.'"

"The Laws of the Navy" is inspired by the right naval tradition—manly, patriotic, and yet not without a personal shrewdness made acceptable by a touch of humour. For example, take this excellent advice:

"If the fairway be crowded with shipping,  
Beating homeward the harbour to win,  
It is meet that, lest any should suffer,  
The steamers pass cautiously in;  
So thou, when thou nearest promotion,  
And the peak that is gilded is nigh,  
G've heed to thy words and thine actions,  
Lest others be wearied thereby.  
It is ill for the winners to worry,  
Take thy fate as it comes with a smile,  
And when thou art safe in the harbour  
They will envy, but may not revile"

What a pity Captain Hopwood does not write a popular song. He would confer a great service on his country by doing so.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### A WOMAN ON WAR-WORK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I send you the following extract from a letter by an F.A.N.Y. Convoy worker, which I think may interest your readers by its lively and vivacious account of a woman's work with the B.E.F.: "We have just had a hectic house-warming tea-party for the new Mess Hut, all the 'brass hats' (Staff), Base Commandant, etc., and all the room so pretty with flowers, brown curtains and walls, and orange light-shades, and all the good little girls in clean uniforms doing their parlour tricks! . . . I am about the busiest person here now! as Thompson (section leader) is down with 'flu,' and Gamwell (sergeant) and Hutchinson (corporal) are both on leave. So its, 'L—, is my car to go here?' (responsible for the parking); 'N—, am I to clean and light the boiler, tidy the camp, or weed the garden?' (responsible for the fatigue parties' work); 'May I have a sparking plug, this cheap one doesn't work?' or 'Have you any oil for my lamps, I was out half the night?' (store and oil keeper); 'Old bird, come and cope, our passage fuse has gone!' (electric light repairer); 'Can I have a bath, old thing, I'm so cold and dirty!' (bathroom No. 1 cleaner and organiser); 'Who is it next for a job, L—, does fetching the bread count as a case?' (telephone operator and job distributor), etc., *ad lib.*—which includes 'mud, cars for the dirtying of' or 'frost, radiators for the freezing of—with starting hard,' as the Army indent books say, they always read backwards, like Sanskrit! We are having Convoy Christmas cards, so please don't bother to send me any, unless you saw any very cheap calendars (4d.); about six would be awfully nice, as the local ones are very unattractive. It's freezing hard again, and the local supply of paraffin being 'na pco' (as the Tommies say), our c.'s are none too warm, so we only go in to go to bed. . . . We are all busy with the Pierrette concert on Friday; the dresses are most alluring, black satinette with wide sash to wind round hips, short skirts with many black frills below! a little *décolleté* with black ruffle and cornichon hat with orange pompons, but there is the usual eleventh hour rush and I ought to be rehearsing or making blobs *now*. Last night a belated V.A.D. had to be fetched at 1 a.m. from the station, and on her way back the night-call girl broke down with magneto trouble, and the V.A.D. who remained impassive was—A— M—. I have not seen her yet, but she has told many she knows me! D— would have laughed the other day; they were painting a level-crossing gate which we use a lot for loading the hospital ship, and every time the man dipped his brush in the paint and looked up, the gate had risen!—to let one of us crawl underneath! Isn't the air news good? There is a wreck not far from here, and the other morning our camp was waved to by a very large visitor! I have another letter from the French prisoner thanking me for the Harrod's parcel, but I sent it to his mother, as he said he had written to me this week instead of her. Ever so many thanks for the bulbs, which have just come. I am growing some indoors in water. Best love to all. Will you pass this on.—Yours, N—.—L.

### HUNTING CATS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The Essex marshes which fringe the north bank of the Thames are, from their low site and clay soil, peculiarly unsuited to rabbits. The original and natural bank of the river is often a mile or more inside the sea wall, and it is obvious that at one time the north bank of the river must have been edged by a broad belt of swamp. The original bank is an abrupt scarp 30ft. to 40ft. high. Just below this miniature cliff line the ground alters its character, and these narrow fields, which extend along in the shelter of the bank and slope down to the slightly lower level of the marsh, are often

known locally as "Slips." Above the line of bank is a flat tableland of good arable, quite different to the marshland below. Very little of this latter is ploughed, though here and there one may see fields of clover or beans. The old river bank, dry and well drained, with sandy strata here and there, makes ideal rabbit ground.

On a certain pleasant knoll which looks out over the marshes a business man has an attractive house. This gentleman's hours of leisure are devoted to roses and cats. The cats are all Persians, and there are twelve or fourteen of them. Close to the house is a large warren, which at one time held any number of rabbits. I have leave to shoot, and as the ground is too much honeycombed for ferretting, I find the best plan is to use a rifle. Many times I have been interested, and a little annoyed, too, at finding rival hunters from among the cats competing against me. There is one large black Persian which is a finished Nimrod. This cat usually takes its spoils into the house after a successful hunt: it has twice brought in stoats, once a mole, and another time a water-rat. In the latter case the cat was wet and had duck-weed sticking to its fur, which shows that the rat was captured in its own element. The odd part about the rabbit hunting is the sort of armed neutrality which exists between the cats and the full-grown rabbits. I have constantly seen a cat sitting over a burrow take no notice whatever of an old rabbit hopping close by. The old rabbits look on and watch the cats eating their young ones; they have to render tribute, and they are quite resigned and calm about it.—FIFUR-DE-LYS.

### ORCHIDS IN SURREY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In reply to a letter signed Alec Harvey *re* orchids in Surrey, I noticed the mistakes made by Sir J. Colman in the Latin names of the bird's-nest orchis (*Neottia Nidus-avis*) and the fragrant orchis (*Habenaria conopsea*). I am very much puzzled about the "*Lastria ovator*." I recognised at once it should have been "*ovata*," but I took it to mean "*Lastrea ovata*" (the common twayblade). Mr. Harvey corrects Sir J. Colman's "*Lastria*" to "*Lastrea*." My books of reference only give me *Lastrea Thelypteris* (the marsh fern). The "*Aura Anthropophora*" of Sir J. Colman, corrected to "*Anthropophora*," is quite unknown to me. I should be so interested if he or any of your readers would give me the common English name and describe the flower, or give me any information about it. I have seven first-rate botanical reference books, and I cannot find it mentioned in one of them.—ELFANOR PEEL.

### AN OLD EDUCATION ACT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Much is heard nowadays of the respective merits of different systems of education, and changes and reforms of various kinds are being proposed and considered. It may be interesting to recall in this connection that the principle of compulsory education was first adopted in Scotland considerably over four hundred years ago. In the fifth Parliament of James IV an Act was passed which provided that "all barons and freeholders, that are of substance, put their eldest sons and heirs to the schools," from the time that they are six or nine years of age till they "be competently founded, and have perfect Latin." After leaving the grammar school they were to remain three years at the school of art and jure, so that they might have "knowledge and understanding of the laws," and help to maintain "justice universally throughout the realm," and, when afterwards acting as sheriffs or judges ordinary under the king, might have "knowledge to do justice, that the poor people should have no need to seek our sovereign lord's principal auditor for every small injury." Failure to comply with the terms of this Act rendered



the barons and freeholders liable to a fine of £20 "to be paid to the king." This is believed to have been the first statutory attempt made in Europe to place education on a compulsory basis.—ANGUS HENDERSON.

#### WANTED, A KIPLING POEM.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Your correspondent J. R. S. Mackenzie will find the poem he requires in Mr. Kipling's "Actions and Reactions" at the end of the story "Garm—a hostage." It also appears in "Songs from Books." I enclose a copy of the poem, the title of which is "The Power of the Dog."—M. GRAHAM.

#### "THE POWER OF THE DOG."

"There is sorrow enough in the natural way  
From men and women to fill our day;  
But when we are certain of sorrow in store,  
Why do we always arrange for more?  
Brothers and Sisters, I bid you beware  
Of giving your heart to a dog to tear.

"Buy a pup and your money will buy  
Love unflinching that cannot lie—  
Perfect passion and worship fed  
By a kick in the ribs or a pat on the head.  
Nevertheless it is hardly fair  
To risk your heart for a dog to tear.

"When the fourteen years which Nature permits  
Are closing in asthma, or tumour, or fits,  
And the vet's unspoken prescription runs  
To lethal chambers or loaded guns,  
Then you will find—it's your own affair,  
But . . . you've given your heart to a dog to tear.

"When the body that lived at your single will,  
When the whimper of welcome is stilled (how still!),  
When the spirit that answered your every mood  
Is gone wherever it goes—for good,  
You will discover how much you care,  
And will give your heart to a dog to tear.

"We've sorrow enough in the natural way,  
When it comes to burying Christian clay.  
Our loves are not given, but only lent,  
At compound interest of cent. per cent.  
Though it's not always the case, I believe,  
That the longer we've kept 'em the more we do grieve:  
For when debts are payable, right or wrong,  
A short-time loan is as bad as a long—  
So why—in Heaven—(before we are there)  
Should we give our hearts to a dog to tear?"

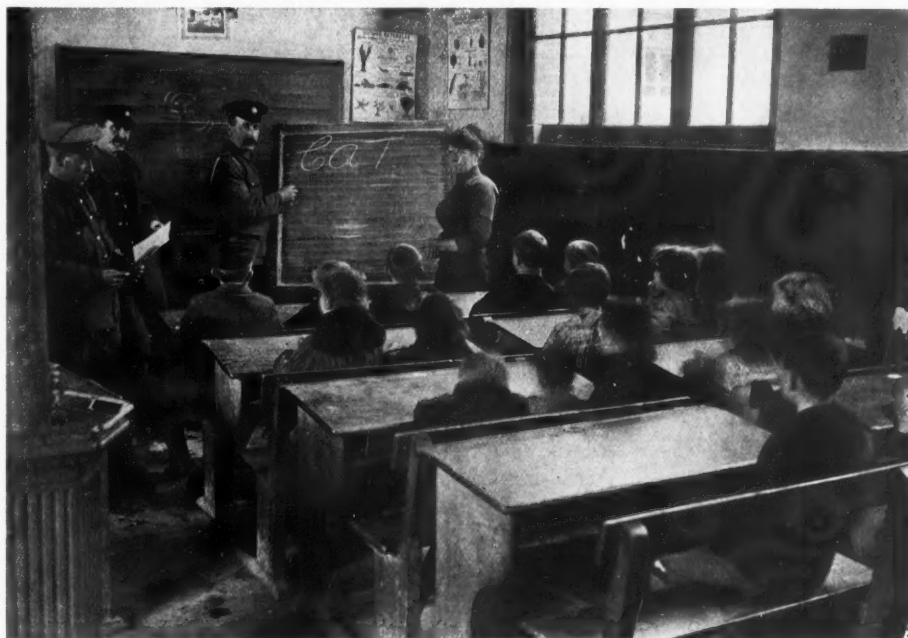
[Correct answers have also been sent by the Duchess of Bedford, V. B. Trinder, E. S. Richardson, J. M. Hurderson, M. J. F. Douglass, B. W. Powney, D. Baxendale, "Wykehamist," "Peatswood," F. Style, S. M. Hutchinson, H. C. Macmillan, A. Hawley, W. P. Richardson, Arthur O. Cooke, M. Sime, "Idle Moment," F. Delmer, M. T. Jones, K. N. Hewett, M. Godlee, H. A. Hopkins, G. T. Thomson and W. L. Galpin.—Ed.]

#### THE ADAPTABLE ENGLISH SOLDIER

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

Sir,—Tommy's usefulness and even more his willingness to help about the house and garden when in billet has become an established fact in our country villages, reconciling many a dubious housewife to the presence of the soldiers. Here he is shown making himself equally at home in France. The men in the picture were billeted on a school—or should it be in a school?—and whiled away their spare time by teaching the children English. The rudimentary animal on the blackboard in the rear leads one to suppose that the lessons were meant to be illustrated.

—A.



"THE CAT-LE CHAT."

#### THE PRICE OF BREAD IN 1800—1.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Your article on "Standard Bread of Old Days" in COUNTRY LIFE of December 16th suggested to me that the enclosed photograph of an entry in an old Bible which came into my possession a few years ago would be of interest at the present time as showing the price at which bread was sold, 3s. 7½d. a gallon, at Winterslow, near Salisbury, in 1800—1, the years mentioned in your article. An old lady, a native of the place, who died about

*in the year of our Lord 1800  
and 1801 was bread sold at  
3-7½ the gallon loaf —  
— in this parish) winterslow —  
wrote by Elizabeth, Daughter  
of John and Mary Baugh —  
and granddaughter, of John Wade  
Genuine —*

#### WHEN BREAD WAS DEAR INDEED.

four years ago at the age of eighty-four, could remember the writer, who used to keep a dame's school in the village.—C. S. W.

#### ANIMALS AND YEW LEAVES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—While spending a few days at Taynult, Argyllshire, I was informed of a case of yew poisoning which had, last August, occurred in the neighbourhood. The victim was a billy goat belonging to an Ardhattan cottager, and it was clearly proved that death had followed the consumption of yew twigs left behind by some hedge trimmers. I had long been aware that the tree with the lanceolate leaves was a source of danger to birds, many cases having come under my personal observation in which death was clearly traced to the familiar evergreen. A few years ago ailing and dead pheasants were picked up in undue numbers in a certain Argyllshire glen. For some time much difficulty was experienced in accounting for the strange malady, but at length suspicion fell on a very old yew tree which grew in a neighbouring graveyard. It was decided to cut it down; but the local woodmen were not willing to hack an object which they had been early taught almost to venerate. At last their scruples were overcome, and the tree was cut down and burnt. From the moment that this work was carried out the trouble among the longtails ceased. In Appin, Argyllshire, three horses belonging to the same owner died within a short time of each other. It was thoroughly established that they were all in the habit of regaling themselves on yew clippings near a neighbouring mansion. A *profos* of this, it is recorded, by a competent field observer, that, near his residence, a quantity of yew cuttings were left to horses and cattle without any injurious result, and that a young lad had, with equal immunity, eaten freely of the berries. The narrator is careful, however, to add that, although innocuous when fresh, such comestibles are

most "poisonous to stock, when decayed." Gilbert White tells us not to let our cattle feed on the foliage of yew trees, and records instances of its deadly effect. We know for a definite fact that to place yew leaves and berries at the disposal of pheasants or other game birds is a serious mistake. From prehistoric times down to the present day, trees of this kind have been very commonly planted in cemeteries, the reason why being a somewhat moot point.—A. M. E.

## CAN BIRDS COUNT?

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As far as my own experience goes in regard to photographing birds, I am quite sure they can count—some only up to two or three, others beyond that. A friend of mine once mentioned an oyster-catcher who counted to five men and a dog, and would not return to its nest, though four men and the said dog left it; but perhaps oyster-catchers are more suspicious as a family than are some other birds. I have always found that wading birds return to their nests better if one or, better still, two people put you into the hide; and, of course, with duck and wild geese there is their acute sense of smell to reckon with also. Mr. Rooker Roberts' notes were indeed most interesting, and I can quite believe that it was necessary to have the stalker with him as a shield; no precaution can be too carefully attended to when such a keen-sighted bird as an eagle has to be reckoned with.—M. G. S. BEST.

## A SUSSEX PLOUGH TEAM.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I see in your issue of December 2nd a photograph of a German pastoral. I am sending one of ploughing with oxen in Sussex, which was also "taken in happier times." These oxen were the ones taken to London to the Naval Tournament to draw the guns that were taken to the relief of Ladysmith. The old man at the plough went with them, and it was his first visit to Town. He told me he liked it very well, except the lights made his eyes ache "dreadful."—ELEANOR SHIFFNER.



## HOW TO DISPOSE OF RABBIT SKINS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—We in the country enjoy no paper so much as COUNTRY LIFE, and find in it information on so many subjects that, naturally, it is to you I write on a question that interests all of us who are trying to increase the food supply of the country by keeping rabbits. Can anything be done with their skins? In France I was told they were worth 1fr. apiece. Is there any way of disposing of them advantageously in England?—ALICE M. IVIMY.

[We sent this letter to Mr. C. J. Davies, who replied as follows: "I am afraid I cannot help you much about the disposal of rabbit skins, as there is, as yet, no organisation in this country for the collection of good sorts, though no doubt this will come. Common skins of wild rabbits, cross-breeds, bi-coloured specimens, etc., have never fetched much, either in France or this country. Their present value in my neighbourhood is high, as rag and bone men, dealers, etc., are giving 1½d. each. In France before the war the skins of Champagne Silvers fetched up to 1s. 3d. apiece at this time of year, and I have heard of 3s. each being given for good Havana skins on the Continent. If I killed enough rabbits of a self-coloured breed, such as Havanas or Beverens, Black Flemish, etc., to make the collection of upwards of a dozen uniform skins possible in a reasonable period of time, I should dry them, wrap them in

## POULTRY FOOD FOR RABBITS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was very interested in Mr. C. J. Davies' article in the issue of October 21st, 1916, and should like, through your columns, to ask him if he thinks Uveco Poultry Food a sufficiently concentrated albuminoid food for rabbits (Belgian hares) and cavies.—A. B. ROTH.

[According to the best authority, the food called "Uveco" is flaked maize (maize cleared, crushed, cooked, rolled into "flakes" and dried), and has

## "GUN OR PLOUGH, IT'S ALL ONE TO US."

the same feeding value as maize in its natural state bar a decreased digestibility owing to the cooking. As it presumably has only about 10½ per cent albuminoids, it is not a suitable single concentrated food for rabbits and cavies.—ED.]

## THE HISTORY OF THE POTATO.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—At the present time, when there is a serious shortage of potatoes (now looked upon as a necessity), it is interesting to trace the gradual rise of this vegetable in public estimation. The potato is a native of subtropical America, but Humboldt states that it has never been found truly wild, and that at the discovery of America by the Spaniards it was cultivated by the Indians from Chile to Columbia, and Pedro Cieca mentions it in his "Cronica de Peru" (published at Seville in 1553) under the name of "battata" or "papa." A monk named Hieronymus Cardan was probably the first to introduce it into Spain, whence it spread to the Netherlands and Italy—but only as a curiosity, and not as an article of food. Sir John Hawkins brought potatoes from Virginia to England in 1563, but according to Sir Joseph Banks they were sweet and not common potatoes. However, in 1585 or 1586 some of the latter tubers were brought from North Carolina to Ireland and cultivated on Sir Walter Raleigh's estate near Cork. In 1853 a statue of Sir Francis Drake—as the introducer of the potato—was erected at Offenburg in Baden. Gerard in his "Herbal" (1597) gives a description and the first woodcut of the plant; and in 1629 Parkinson in his "Paradisus" gives another figure, and adds details as to cooking potatoes. In 1663 the Royal Society took steps to increase the cultivation of this vegetable, on the ground that it was good food for pigs and might prove useful in time of famine. Its cultivation on a large scale began in Ireland, and spread to Lancashire at the end of the seventeenth century; and later to Scotland, Germany and France, but in the latter country it was for long supposed to cause leprosy, and was therefore not popular. The potato is not even mentioned in "The Complete Gardiner," by Loudon and Wise (1719), thus showing that it could not have been of much importance at that date. From the middle of the eighteenth century to the present day the potato has been recognised as a valuable food plant, and on more than one occasion the failure of the crop has caused a vast amount of distress and even famine.—G. B. H.



## WHERE KING BRUCE STUDIED THE SPIDER.

newspaper with plenty of naphthalene, and store them in a tin box until sufficient were collected to offer to a fur merchant. I have one or two now which I have kept several years in this way without apparent deterioration."—ED.]

## WANTED: A RECIPE FOR GOAT MILK CHEESES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I should be grateful if any of your readers could send me a good recipe for making goat milk cheeses, as I am expecting a heavy dairy in the spring.—H. C. KER (Rector).

## BRUCE'S CASTLE, RATHLIN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In nursery days, when our card houses fell down, the text of the homily preached to us by our nurse was generally the tale of King Robert Bruce and the spider. I therefore enclose this photograph, which shows all that is left of the scene of that historic incident, in case it may be of some interest to your readers. The ruins of the castle are to be seen on the south-east point of Rathlin Island (Co. Antrim), overlooking North Channel. Bruce fled to this keep (now reduced to a mouldering ruin on a grass crag) to escape his enemies; but as they followed him hotly, he was obliged to take refuge in a cave which lies underneath it, and while hiding here the persevering spider wove a web across the mouth of the cave which misled his pursuers.—MAUD D. HAVILAND.